Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

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LD201258 [Editorial Report]

Hijacking: Hostages, Crew Released

Hostages of the hijacked Kuwaiti aircraft were released at 0500 GMT 20 April following "new" efforts by Algerian mediators, Algiers radio reported. AFP noted that the crew members were also released. Shortly before their release, Algiers radio added, the Algerian interior minister told the press that the affair had been resolved, but he gave no details on the negotiations. A statement read by the hijackers 2 hours before releasing the hostages announced their decision to end the hijacking, KUNA reported. On the hijackers' whereabouts, AFP said they left the plane "probably before the hostages were freed," while Voice of Lebanon radio reported that they are still on board. AFP also stated that crew members "confirmed" reports that three of the seven hijackers joined the plane in Mashhad, Iran.

Gulf Conflict

Iranian Attack on Kuwait—Iran fired a Scud missile at Kuwait early 20 April, a Kuwaiti Defense Ministry source announced in a statement reported by KUNA. Kuwait has the full right to take appropriate action against this new "aggression," the official added. A related Radio Monte Carlo report said the missile landed near the Al-Wafrah oil field but caused no casualties or damage. Kuwait had earlier warned that Iran might use its allegations about the use of Bubiyan Island as a pretext to attack Kuwait, KUNA noted.

Iranian Response to U.S.—The Foreign Ministry told the Swiss ambassador that Iran will respond to the U.S. "impudent aggression" and that it reserves the right to "crush" U.S. "aggressor forces," Tehran radio reported. The ambassador, who represents U.S. interests in Iran, was given a "strongly worded" Iranian protest note about U.S. military actions in the Gulf. A Tehran radio commentary likewise warned that Iran will not consider the issue over "until fundamental and retaliatory blows have been dealt to the criminal enemy." Iran's navy commander stated that "as long as even one American remains in the Persian Gulf, the brave children of the Iranian nation will avenge the wrongly shed blood of their comrades in arms," the radio noted.

On the U.S.-Iranian clashes in the Gulf, the navy commander disclosed that 15 crew members of the frigate "Jowshan" were killed and 29 injured in the engagement with U.S. warships. A number of Iranian sailors on the warships "Sahand" and "Sabalan" were also killed or wounded, though others were saved, he noted. As for alleged U.S. losses, the IRGC naval commander reiterated Iran's claim to have downed a Cobra helicopter, and also asserted that Iranian gunboats sank a U.S. "logistical vessel," according to Tehran radio.

Other Reaction—A Libyan Foreign Liaison Bureau statement cited by JANA condemned the U.S. "hostile military acts" against Iran, viewing them as a new episode in the recurring U.S. "imperialist aggressions" against that country. In contrast, WAKH carried a UAE Foreign Ministry statement which denounced Iran's "unjustifiable" naval attack on a platform in the UAE's Mubarak oil field, affirming the UAE's right to take appropriate measures to safeguard its rights, security, and sovereignty. The UAE statement disclosed that the Iranian attack caused "human casualties and serious material damage" to oil installations.

Iranian Attack, Mines Found—Iranian gunboats attacked a UAE-flagged tanker in the southern Gulf 19 April, setting the vessel on fire, according to shipping sources cited by KUNA. Italian mine sweepers had earlier discovered two mines in international waters off Iran's Farsi Island, the Italian ambassador to the UAE told ANSA.

Iran-Iraq Fighting—Iraq launched three more "Al-Husayn" missiles between 2105 GMT 18 April and 0648 GMT 19 April, targeting Esfahan, Shiraz, and Tehran, according to a military communique carried by Voice of the Masses radio. IRNA reported that several people were killed in the attack on Tehran. Iranian aircraft raided Iraqi positions in the Al-Faw sector 19 April and bombed "military-economic" installations in Irbil the following day, according to Tehran radio. An Iraqi spokesman told INA that the raid on Irbil caused civilian casualties.

On aircraft losses, an Iraqi communique carried by Voice of the Masses claimed that three Iranian F-5 aircraft were shot down by Iraqi antiaircraft fire in the Al-Faw sector 19 April, but an Iranian spokesman cited by IRNA claimed that all Iranian planes returned safely to base that day. An Iraqi spokesman denied Iranian claims that an Iraqi Sukhoi was downed in the same area 18 April, according to INA.

Neither side reported new military developments in the Al-Faw area 19 April, but IRNA claimed that Iranian forces killed or wounded 1,200 Iraqis and captured 220 in "lightning attacks" against Iraqi positions on the northern front. However, an Iraqi spokesman told INA that this was just a "border skirmish" in which the Iranians sustained losses.

Iraqi-Saudi Summit—Saudi King Fahd congratulated Iraqi President Saddam Husayn on the liberation of Al-Faw during talks between the two leaders in Riyadh, Voice of the Masses reported, noting that their meeting was held in a "fraternal atmosphere." Saddam Husayn also visited the holy mosque in Mecca to thank God for his victory and to perform the minor pilgrimage, the radio disclosed.

Israel

The IDF closed all exits from the territories at midnight 19 April, and residents will not be permitted to cross into Israel until the night of 21 April, HADASHOT reported. The new blockade is similar to that imposed on Land Day, the paper added. Jerusalem radio confirmed that the Gaza Strip was sealed off "until further notice," but did not say whether similar measures were applied to the West Bank. AN IDF source cited by the radio stated that the "preemptive" measures in the Gaza Strip are in anticipation of the 20 April funeral of PLO official Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad) and of Israel's independence day.

Israel deported another eight residents of "Judaea and Samaria" to Lebanon 19 April, Jerusalem radio reported, noting that they were "suspected of incitement and of organizing disruptions of public order." Six of the deportees are residents of Bayta who took part in the attack on children from Elon More, the radio said, and another is a leading Al-Shabibah activist from Bi'r Zayt University. The expulsion brings to 20 the overall number of deportees since the beginning of the uprising. The radio also noted that one Palestinian was killed and another injured by IDF gunfire in the Samaria village of Faqqu'ah. The clash occurred when residents attacked soldiers who had demolished a house in the village. In remarks cited by HADASHOT, Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin revealed that 5,000 residents of the territories have thus far been detained, and more than 1,400 are under administrative detention.

On the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir, Jerusalem radio broadcast Minister 'Ezer Weizman's remark that this was a "negative" action which will not help the fight against terrorism but will give rise to more extreme feelings and actions.

PLO, Al-Wazir's Funeral

PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Libya the night of 19 April and Libyan-Palestinian talks are scheduled to begin in Tripoli shortly, Radio Monte Carlo reported. The radio said this refutes speculation that 'Arafat and Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi have left for Damascus to attend the funeral of PLO official Khalil al-Wazir. 'Arafat had earlier met with Libyan official Major Al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi after attending a ceremony marking the departure of Al-Wazir's body from Tunis to Damascus, according to JANA. A Tunis radio report on the ceremony noted that 'Arafat read out a eulogy of Al-Wazir in a "solemn and emotional atmosphere." Palestinian officials accompanying the body to Damascus included PLO Political Department chief Faruq Qaddumi, the radio said. Damascus radio listed two PLO Executive Committee members and three Fatah Central Committee members in the party accompanying the coffin, but Qaddumi's name was not among them.

Saudi Arabia, Iran Hajj Dispute

Following talks with officials in Saudi Arabia, Iranian pilgrimage supervisor Emami-Jamarani declared that the Saudis had broken a promise made 4 years ago to allow 200,000 Iranians to make the pilgrimage, Tehran radio reported. A Saudi official cited by SPA called these claims "absolutely unfounded and untrue," adding that Iran is entitled to bring only 45,000 pilgrims in accordance with an ICO resolution approved at the summit in Amman. The source also stressed that the organization of marches and other such activities will not be allowed. Emami-Jamarani stated that Ayatollah Khomeyni will decide if Iranian pilgrims will go to Mecca "under these circumstances," Tehran radio added.

Afghanistan

Prime Minister Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand opened a conference attended by U.S., Soviet, and Afghan public figures in Kabul, BAKHTAR reported. He invited foreign investment in economic projects to revitalize establishments destroyed during the war, noting that the USSR has already granted "huge" economic assistance. Keshtmand told the U.S. attendees that the United States will be viewed as the "organizer and instigator of war and tension" if it continues to arm the opposition and urged it to provide aid for returning refugees instead.

Palestinian Affairs

Further on Funeral Preparations for Al-Wazir

Jordanian Government Thanked

JN190742 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
19 Apr 88 p 26

[Text] Amman—The PLO has thanked the Jordanian Government for offering to assist and organize the funeral of martyr Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] in Jordan. Brigadier 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Yahya, PLO Executive Committee representative in Jordan, has affirmed that the PLO and Jordan pursue a common march and destiny and that the struggle for liberation and the return will not cease until victory.

Brig al-Yahya said that after it was agreed to hold the funeral in Amman, it was later decided to hold it in Damascus at the request of martyr Abu Jihad's parents and family.

Body Flown to Damascus

LD191337 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
1200 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] PLO cadres and its leadership, led by Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, took part in the funeral procession of the deceased martyr, Abu Jihad, who was assassinated at dawn last Saturday by perfidious Zionist arms.

The body of the late Palestinian leader was flown from Tunis to Damascus to be buried in the cemetery of Palestinian revolution martyrs at the Yarmuk refugee camp in Damascus in accordance with the wishes of the deceased's parents who live in Syria.

A solemn cortege assembled at Tunis-Carthage International Airport which was attended by martyr Khalil al-Wazir's family, by the Palestinian leadership, by a number of officials representing the Tunisian Government, by Major Al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi, Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdahfi's representative; by Muhsin 'Ibrahim, representative of the Lebanese national movement; a number of officials of the Arab League and its specialized departments, and by representatives from the diplomatic corps accredited to Tunisia.

The Al-Fatiha verse from the Koran was read out and the Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat and the martyr's widow, Umm Jihad, received condolences for the martyrdom of the leader, Khalil al-Wazir.

The funeral cortege for the body of the martyr, which was covered by the Palestinian flag and wreaths, started in Soukra where aboard a military vehicle Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat read out, in a solemn and emotional atmosphere, in which women's ululations were mingled with the revolution's patriotic songs, an address in which he cited the virtues of the martyr Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, promising the deceased's soul that the Palestinian revolution will continue and that the blessed uprising will also continue in the occupied land until victory and the goals for which the Palestinian people have been struggling are achieved.

Yasir 'Arafat stressed the Palestinian people's commitment to continue the march along the path of struggle and martyrdom, a path which the Palestinian revolution has been furnishing with souls over successive generations. He added: Our pride in the march of the revolution is that we leaders are eager to be in the forefront of the martyr's convoys. The Palestinian leader affirmed that Abu Jihad's blessed blood will bring upon the enemies of the Palestinian revolution fire and destruction, stressing that such blood will not have been shed in vain.

The body of the martyr Khalil al-Wazir was accompanied aboard the plane taking him from Tunis to Damascus by a number of the Palestinian leadership, among whom was Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department; Nayif Hawatimah, DLFP secretary general; and by Habib 'Ammar, minister of interior; and Hamed Karoui, director of the Destourian Democratic Rally, who were asked by His Excellency President Zine El Abidine to represent Tunisia at the funeral procession in Damascus. Abu Jihad's body was also accompanied by members of the martyr's family and by an Arab League delegation.

'Arafat Attendance Discussed

JN200745 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
0500 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] The body of the Palestinian leader Abu Jihad will be buried in the cemetery for Palestinian martyrs in the Al-Yarmuk camp in Damascus' southern suburb.

Contrary to the expectations of some Palestinian factions, PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat did not arrive in Damascus yesterday to take part in Abu Jihad's funeral today because the conditions for ending the estrangement between the PLO and Syria for the past 5 years have not been fulfilled.

Nevertheless, Palestinian sources still hope that differences over 'Arafat's arrival in Damascus will be resolved and expect the PLO leader to arrive at the last moment.

A meeting was held for that purpose yesterday. It was attended by George Habash, PFLP secretary general; Nayif Hawatimah, DFLP secretary general; three Fatah Central Committee members: Abu al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], Abu al-Hawl [Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid], and Hani al-Hasan; Talat Ya'qub, secretary general of the Palestinian Liberation Front; and a representative of the Palestinian Communist Party.

According to a PFLP official, they discussed the possibility of Yasir 'Arafat visiting Damascus to take part in Abu Jihad's funeral and also perhaps to redress relations between Syria and the PLO leadership.

Algeria sent to Damascus an important delegation led by the second man in the ruling party, Mohamed Cherif Messaadia, to take part in Abu Jihad's funeral. According to the PFLP official, Algeria is making intensive consultations to bring about a direct meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and 'Arafat. If the Algerian endeavors should succeed, 'Arafat will come to Damascus to take part in the funeral. 'Arafat's visit will also consecrate the reconciliation with Syria and will turn a new leaf in relations between 'Arafat and President Hafiz al-Asad.

Qaddumi Denies Request Made To Recognize Israel

PM191559 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Apr 88 pp 1, 2

[Zaki Musa report: "Qaddumi To AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Gorbachev Did Not Request Recognition of Israel"]

[Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—PLO Political Department head Faruq Qaddumi has refuted reports by TASS that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev asked PLO Executive Committee leader Yasir 'Arafat or himself, during their meeting in Moscow at the end of last week, to recognize Israel.

Qaddumi, who was talking from his home in Tunis, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: "I believe that the flexible Soviet approach, which is anxious to resolve regional issues, as well as the language of flexibility reflected in Soviet statements have been misinterpreted by Western circles."

The head of the PLO Political Department added: The Soviet friends assured us of their just and legitimate support for the Palestinian people's national rights, foremost among which is their right to self-determination and to establish their own independent state. What we heard emphasizes the firm Soviet stand which we saw in previous initiatives and no change has occurred in that stand.

On the results achieved by the Palestinian delegation's visit to Moscow, he said: "There was an understanding; views were exchanged. We carefully considered events and developments as well as the change the uprising has achieved in international reality and international politics."

About the Soviet position on the initiative by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, Abu al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi] said: "There was no Soviet satisfaction with or conviction in the details of the U.S. plan. But the new policy and approach pursued by the new Soviet leadership as well as the flexible language and eagerness to resolve the conflict reflected the answer in diplomatic language. As I have already said, the Soviet stand is firm; it has not changed. We explained our position several times; namely, that Shultz did not come with an initiative. He came with a plan lacking elements of eagerness, taking into account both his and Israel's interests. It did not pay any attention to Arab and Palestinian interests".

In reply to a question about the date of 'Arafat's visit to Amman, Qaddumi said: "I have no information about the date of the visit, but a meeting can be held and messages can be exchanged between the two leaderships in the near future. I believe that Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] is preoccupied with appointments and matters he has been engaged with for some time."

About the Soviet Union's preparations to launch a new initiative to settle the problem of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the head of the PLO Political Department said: "The Soviet Union has continued its initiatives for a long time. They are based on the idea of conducting consultations among the five Security Council permanent member states with a view to forming a preliminary committee to prepare for the convening of an international conference".

Furthermore, at his press conference in Kuwait, 'Arafat yesterday denied that Gorbachev asked him to recognize Israel, describing press information in this regard as "unfounded." He said the Soviet leader assured him that the Palestinian people have the right to independence as well as to establish a state along the lines followed by the Israeli people.

He added that he had renewed his emphasis to Gorbachev that the PLO recognizes all UN resolutions, including Security Council Resolution 242, which emphasizes the right of existence for all states in the region, including Israel.

'Arafat, who described his recent visit as very important, affirmed that if an international conference is convened, the PLO will agree to join a joint Arab delegation to enjoy all rights exercised by the other states within such a delegation.

Algeria

Reportage on End of Hijack Crisis in Algiers

Statement Announces End

LD200335 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0323 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Algiers, 20 April, KUNA—The hijackers of the Kuwaiti civilian aircraft announced a few moments ago in a statement read to the control tower that they have decided to end the hijacking today on the occasion of the start of Ramadan and out of consideration for the efforts made by the Algerian Government and also to achieve concord among Muslims.

Contacts between the Algerian side and the hijackers began at 0300 local time when the control tower contacted the hijackers seven times in a row without receiving any reply. At 0320 the hijackers contacted the control tower and asked for a doctor to be sent to examine one of the sick people.

Following this an Algerian negotiator went on board the hijacked Kuwaiti aircraft [words indistinct] and then left it again. Afterwards, the hijackers announced in a radio contact with the control tower that they were going to broadcast a statement soon.

At 0400 local time the hijackers read a statement consisting of four points in which they attacked the United States. They also included an analysis on how to win what they called the "Islamic revolution," and then they said they had decided to end the hijacking of the Kuwaiti aircraft.

The hijackers did not say however, how they would end the affair of this civilian aircraft which was hijacked 16 days ago. But the journalists at Houari Boumedienne airport, where the plane is grounded, [words indistinct] say airport personnel are bringing the stairs nearer to the plane, which reinforces the belief that the release of the hostages is imminent.

Kuwaiti Amir Notified

LD200435 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 0414 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Unscheduled live hookup with reporter Jawida at Algiers International Airport]

[Text] [Jawida] Indeed, the latest development in the affair of the hijacked Kuwaiti aircraft is, as I said earlier, the decision of the hijackers to put an end to the hijacking today. At any rate, more details from Abdelkader Alami.

[Alami] Yes, the minister of the interior, Mr El Hadi Khdiri, is at this very moment giving a press conference in which he is giving details of the positive results achieved. In a few moments, I will be providing you with these details.

Following the positive results achieved thanks to the efforts made by Algeria in reaching a peaceful settlement and saving innocent lives, His Excellency President Chadli Bendjedid has taken the initiative of announcing the good news to His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Sabah, the amir of Kuwait, who received it with happiness and joy.

The amir gave thanks for Algeria's endeavors and the efforts of its president, Mr Chadli Bendjedid, and stressed his determination to develop the personal relations existing between them and exploit them in the interest of the two sister countries. I will get back to you in a few moments, Jawida.

Interior Minister's Statement

LD200545 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 0448 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Live telephone report from reporter Abdelkader Alami at Algiers International Airport]

[Text] [Alami] Yes, this is Abdelkader Alami on the line. Ladies and gentlemen, good morning from Houari Boumedienne International Airport where we have been following the developments in the affair of the hijacked Kuwaiti aircraft. We informed you earlier of its happy ending and now we read to you the statement by the Algerian Interior Minister:

Following a pressing request from the highest political authorities in the State of Kuwait, the Algerian Government agreed to receive the hijacked Kuwaiti Airways aircraft which was on a commercial flight. With this action, Algeria remains loyal to its principles, which are known to the UN and to the International Air Transport Association, that it does not agree to receive hijacked aircraft unless it is at the request of the state which owns the aircraft and for humanitarian reasons.

In such a situation, and due especially to the relations of brotherhood and friendship existing between Algeria and Kuwait and the deplorable developments on the hijacked aircraft at Larnaca Airport, Algeria did not hinder the search for a happy and peaceful ending and thus it made its own efforts.

The international community is witness to the firm and constant stand adopted by Algeria at all levels and in all directions with a view to fulfilling all the conditions through persuasion and trust to resolve this situation in the shortest time possible. Algeria's main concern was to safeguard innocent lives within the framework of its sovereignty and in consultation with the Kuwaiti Government without intervention from any other party or parties, either with regard to this action or to the results achieved.

Fortunately, Algeria was able to settle the problem of the hijacked Kuwaiti aircraft in a spirit of understanding, indulgence, and respect for human lives in accordance with teachings of Islam. At the beginning of the blessed month of Ramadan, Algeria is proud of the results it has achieved in resolving this affair and it expresses its hope that this happy ending will be received with joy by the entire international community and all freedom and peace-loving peoples.

That was the statement made by the interior minister to the national and international press. It is worth mentioning that after reading the statement, the interior minister said the hostages on board the Boeing 747 will be released soon, adding more precisely, at 0600 local time [0500 GMT].

So, the aircraft is still on the tarmac at about 500 metres from the VIP lounge. Until the release, we leave you now, hoping to give further details of this affair, which has lasted 7 nights and 8 days. That is all for the moment, and thank you.

Hostages Released 20 Apr

NC200516 Paris AFP in English 0514 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Algiers, April 20 (AFP)—The hijackers holding a Kuwaiti airliner here began releasing their hostages Wednesday. Journalists at the scene saw two women leaving the plane at six a.m. (0500 GMT), the time announced for the release of the 31 hostages by the Algerian authorities.

The women, believed to be the only two female hostages held aboard, waved as they got off the plane and were whisked away in a police escorted convoy. The women were understood to be members of the Kuwaiti ruling family.

Some 20 more hostages arrived shortly afterwards at the airport VIP lounge aboard a bus. They, too, waved at journalists waiting on the grass outside.

The passengers had been held aboard the plane since April 5 by a group demanding the release of 17 prisoners held in Kuwait for terrorism offences in exchange for their freedom. The Kuwaiti authorities consistently refused to give into their demands. Sources close to the Algerian mediators said all the passengers had been freed, but the crew were still aboard the plane, along with the hijackers.

The freed male hostages were welcomed in the VIP lounge by Kuwaiti Government representatives. [passage omitted]

A well-informed source at Algiers Airport said after the release of the passengers that the hijackers were no longer aboard the plane. The source said they had left the aircraft, probably before the hostages were freed. Seven crew members were seen to come off the plane at 6:45 a.m. (0545 GMT).

The eighth member of the crew was said to have left the aircraft with the two women who were the first to be released.

The 21 male passengers and three of the crew, including the captain, left the airport at seven a.m. (0600 GMT) by bus for an Algiers hospital for medical examination and treatment.

Another male passenger, also a member of the Kuwaiti royal family, left the plane with his sisters, informed sources said. [passage omitted]

Freed members of the crew confirmed earlier reports that the four hijackers who took over the plane were joined by three others after the plane landed at Mashhad.

Captain Yusuf Subhi, a 54-year-old Iraqi, said, "It was sometimes very hard, sometimes less bad".

The captain said that once in Algiers the crew had been placed at the rear of the plane with the passengers.

"We knew nothing of what was going on, the hijackers simply said that negotiations were continuing".

Captain Subhi, a white-bearded, balding man, appeared extremely tired. He said he had naturally been "extremely worried about the fate of all the passengers and crew."

A Kuwaiti steward, Muhammad al-Dukhi, 28, said the hijackers "acted like real professionals" and "never made a mistake." They were rarely grouped together and the hostages always had to ask permission to move. This was not always granted.

Mr al-Dukhi said the passengers were all put in the rear of the plane with their hands tied by plastic bonds, but he added, "there was no excessive brutality." [passage omitted]

'One Concession' Reported

NC200834 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0824 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] All the passengers and crew members who were held in the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner for 16 days left the plane this morning. However, reports say that the hijackers are still on board. REUTER, meanwhile, cites diplomatic sources in Kuwait as saying that Algeria has made only one concession to the hijackers: They will be allowed to leave Algeria secretly after temporary detention.

Hijackers Make Statement

LD201058 Algiers APS in Arabic 0845 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Algiers, 20 Apr (APS)—[Passage omitted on release of the hostages] The hijackers said in a statement that their action was for the release of "their brothers in Kuwait, all detainees in prisons in Europe and in reactionary Arab capitals, and heroes in Israeli prisons."

The hijackers added that "we never renounced our demands." They addressed a call to the Islamic and Arab countries to face Zionism, which has infiltrated deep into the Arab world, and to face up to the U.S. tide by being committed to unity, struggle, and sacrifice to scrap Zionism and the Shultz plan, which aims at subduing the region and eliminating the Islamic resistance in southern Lebanon. The statement added that "there is no salvation without the annihilation of Israel." [passage omitted hailing Palestinian uprising]

'Safe Passage' Deal Reported

AU201212 Paris AFP in English 1200 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Paris, April 20 (AFP)—The seven hijackers of a Kuwaiti airliner were granted safe passage to Lebanon in exchange for the release in Algiers early Wednesday of 31 hostages, anti-terrorist experts here said.

The Arabic-speaking hijackers were evacuated from the Boeing 747 some 30 minutes before the hostages—including three members of the Kuwaiti ruling Al-Sabah family—walked to freedom at the end of their 16-day ordeal.

The hijackers were escorted from the plane under total darkness by Algerian security officers, unseen by scores of reporters who were camped on the opposite side of the aircraft, the experts said.

The abductors of the Kuwait Airways jet were then expected to board a plane to Libya from where they would fly on to mostly Muslim West Beirut, according to the deal worked out between Algerian mediators and the hijackers.

The anti-terrorist experts said it was not immediately possible to know if this arrangement had been carried out, adding that the Algerian authorities might have opted to keep the hijackers in a safe-house before flying them out. [passage omitted]

Algerian Diplomacy Hailed

LD201506 Kuwait KUNA in English 1341 GMT 20 Apr 88

[By Bandar al-Shalahi and Samir al-Qaryuti]

[Text] Algiers, April 20 (KUNA)—The crisis of the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner has come to an end without making any deal, except an assurance from the Algerian Government to allow the hijackers to leave either to Lebanon or Tehran, informed sources here said Wednesday.

The sources said the air pirates have agreed to surrender to the Algerian authorities in return for an assurance to allow them the right to leave to either Beirut or Tehran.

It was also learnt that the negotiator who boarded the airliner last Sunday and last night was the Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi who convinced the hijackers to put an end to the operation. The happy end to the crisis is viewed as a great achievement for the Algerian diplomacy.

The sources gave more details about the release operation, saying at first five hijackers left the plane then 10 minutes later four other pirates left the plane and following that the hostages came out from Al-Jabiriyah airliner.

The hostages were received by the Kuwaiti delegation headed by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sa'ud al-'Usaymi and the Algerian delegation headed by Interior Minister El Hadi Khdiri.

Sources of the military hospital, where the hostages were sent, said all the released are enjoying good health following the medical check-up they have undergone. The families of the released hostages are expected to arrive here today to accompany them to Kuwait tomorrow.

Chad

Oueddei Addresses Tripoli GUNT Rally 27 Mar

AB181600 (Clandestine) Bardai Chadian National Radio in French 1838 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Excerpt] As promised earlier, let us go back to the important people's meeting that was chaired on 27 March in Tripoli by Comrade Goukouni Oueddei, GUNT chairman, following the signing of the 19 March agreement. It was a self-critical speech (?enumerating) all the ills that prevented the GUNT from pursuing the important task of national liberation that began over 20 years ago [passage omitted]

The meeting began with a soul-inspiring preliminary speech by the dean, Mahamat Abba Sa'id, secretary general of the First Army. [passage omitted on speech in Arabic]

After this speech, the comrade chairman of the GUNT, Goukouni Oueddei, delivered the following speech:

[Begin Oueddei speech in Arabic followed by sentence by sentence translation into French] Fellow countrymen, [words indistinct], ladies and gentlemen, (?it is my pleasure) to address this large meeting of Chadians. Today's rally is a happy and encouraging event. I would like, on my own behalf, and on behalf of my colleagues who are present here, to thank you first for massively heeding our call by turning up here in great numbers. [Words indistinct] that you are aware of the development of the Chadian situation and (?that because of) the political atmosphere you are ready to mobilize yourselves for the national cause. Allow me to say how happy I am to be here with you today at this historic meeting. Dear brothers and sisters, it is a great honor for me to address you in my capacity as chairman of the GUNT.

Fellow countrymen [applause], I can reassure you that we have organized this meeting (?not for our personal aggrandizement) but rather to address you, to directly inform [word indistinct] fully, and objectively of the steps being taken to achieve the unity of all the revolutionary Chadian forces. I would like to inform you directly because I have learned, alas, that the information that you have received indirectly is often incomplete and inexact. Very often this information is deliberately distorted and interpreted in a biased manner by dishonest persons. This is why I have convened this meeting. That is the purpose of today's meeting which I willingly place under the theme of forgiveness.

I rejoice over, and support all the efforts made by [words indistinct], and by all those who are opposed to the Ndjamena regime to ensure that we all unite in order to liberate our country from dictatorship and from imperialist occupation. [Words indistinct] message and I would like to share this with you. [applause] In fact, the Chadian revolution has continued since it was started by the Frolinat and has the challenge of combating, by all possible means, any dictatorial regime [passage indistinct] and to set up in Chad a democratic and progressive regime capable of implementing the principles of democracy. [passage indistinct]

For over 20 years now, this noble objective has guided our daily action to achieve our revolutionary goal. But this goal has not yet been achieved. [Words indistinct] the goal is thwarted by several attempts by the imperialist powers and their local servants who [words indistinct] in their strategy in the region. [Words indistinct] danger for their interests in the country. They have made every effort to establish and support a regime in Ndjamena which is at their beck and call. So international imperialism has thwarted the success of the Chadian revolution. After nearly a quarter of century of vile fratricidal war, to renounce our historic objective is to deny our revolutionary ambitions and denounce our martyrs who have fallen on the battlefield or who have perished in Habre's prisons.

[Passage omitted] The situation in Chad must change. We have always desired and wished for peace. Since 1986 in particular, we have directed our efforts towards a negotiated solution. In this regard we have shown our readiness and desire by proposing certain readjustments: structural and institutional readjustment of the system in Ndjamena. This readjustment will (?comprise the following): First, agreement to negotiate with the GUNT as the sole partner; Second, agreement to revise the Fundamental Act [Constitution]; Third, agreement of the Libyan [word indistinct]; Fourth, agreement to integrate the [name indistinct] Armed Forces into the FANT on an equal footing.

Unfortunately, the Ndjamena group rejected all our proposals even though all the conditions for the achievement of national reconciliation had been met. However, in view of the rift that occured within the GUNT, the government of [words indistinct]. As you can well imagine, it is out of the question for us to accept (?Habre's) terms. (?To satisfy) the international imperialists, Habre prefers to impose himself by force. [Words indistinct] to camouflage and marginalize the internal conflict by deliberately laying emphasis on the border conflict. Nevertheless, we are all aware that this will not change the nature of the Chadian internal conflict and [words indistinct]. [passage omitted]

We must (?adopt a new attitude) and envisage the future without afterthought. We must strengthen our unity together [words indistinct] and establish together united political and military structures to ensure revolutionary continuity. In any case unity [words indistinct] is indispensable for the realization of our common cause. [passage omitted]

[Words indistinct] cooperation with our Libyan friends. [applause] The interests of Chad (?come before other considerations). [applause] [Words indistinct] Chad finds peace. Chad is moving side by side with the great Libyan Jamahiriyah to ensure Chad's salvation. [applause] (?A committee) has been set up by the Libyans, and a similar one has been established [words indistinct]. These two committees will form a joint committee that will work in the common interest of the Chadian and Libyan peoples. [passage omitted]

Egypt

Joint Communique With Tunisia Signed in Cairo

NC191240 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1050 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Cairo, 19 Apr (MENA)—Egypt and Tunisia have stressed their support for the struggle of the Palestinian people under the leadership of their legitimate representative, the PLO. The two countries also expressed their support for the heroic uprising of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and denounced the arbitrary measures applied by the Israeli occupation authorities.

This came in a joint communique signed in Cairo this morning at the conclusion of the 4-day visit to Egypt by Tunisian Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche. Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi signed the joint communique on behalf of Egypt and prime minister Baccouche signed for Tunisia. Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; Dr Yusri Mustafa, minister of economy and foreign trade; Dr Faruq Husni, minister of culture and head of the escort team; the Egyptian ambassador to Tunisia; and the Tunisian ambassador in Cairo were present at the occasion.

In their joint communique, Egypt and Tunisia pledged their support for the efforts aimed at the achievement of a just and lasting settlement in the Middle East which would satisfy the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right for self-determination.

Concerning the Iraq-Iran war, the two sides called for further efforts to end the fighting, underlining their support for Security Council Resolution 598 which embodies the views of the world community as a whole. Egypt and Tunisia praised Iraq for its favorable stand on this resolution and other mediation efforts.

The two countries noted that the continued hostilities in the Gulf could only mean more bloodshed and waste of resources, as well as regional and international complications. This could lead to further instability in this part of the world.

The communique states that the views of the two countries, which were expressed during the talks cochaired by their prime ministers, were convergent on all the issues discussed.

Egypt expressed appreciation for the leading role which Tunisia, under the leadership of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, is playing in furthering cooperation and fraternity among the Maghreb countries. Tunisia's belief in goodneighborliness and in resolving disputes by peaceful means contributes to security, stability, and prosperity in the Arab Maghreb.

The two countries underlined the necessity to coordinate their stands within the framework of the OAU in order to strengthen this organization and boost its role in serving the goals of liberation and development in the African continent. The two countries also condemned the apartheid policies of South Africa and expressed support for the independence of Namibia.

According to the joint communique, Egypt and Tunisia agreed to conclude three new agreements on preferential tariffs, the avoidance of double taxation, and guarantees for investment. The two countries also pledged a forceful application of the existing equal trade agreement.

Egypt and Tunisia agreed to hold a weeklong exhibition of Tunisian products in Cairo and one of Egyptian products in Tunisia before the end of the year, the aim being to stimulate bilateral trade. It was decided that the economy ministers of both countries would keep in touch to ensure that the necessary steps are taken.

Egypt and Tunisia expressed their interest in joint action to activate Arab-African cooperation. In this respect, the two sides agreed to keep up constant consultations on Arab, African, and international issues with a view to serving the objectives of both countries; that is, the support of pan-Arab issues and the establishment of security and stability in the region.

Where bilateral relations are concerned, the two countries affirmed their sincere wish to bolster cooperation in the political, economic, trade, tourism, technical, media, educational, and cultural fields. With regard to economic matters, they agreed in principle to reconsider the trade protocol signed between them in 1971, and make a new trade agreement.

The two countries also agreed to undertake a study of the opportunities for cooperation in air and maritime transport, telecommunications, and tourism, and to encourage joint investments. The two countries expressed satisfaction at the current progress of the bilateral media cooperation that is taking place in accordance with the media cooperation protocol signed in March 1988. With regard to cultural matters the two sides agreed on the importance of enhancing and intensifying exchanges in the various cultural and technical fields.

Egypt voiced appreciation for the Tunisian response to the invitation of the opening of the first international season of the Cairo opera. The Egyptian minister of culture invited his Tunisian counterpart to pay an official visit to Egypt to discuss bilateral cooperation, with special emphasis on drawing up a new program for cultural cooperation. Tunisia expressed willingness to cooperate in scientific research and in the exchange of scholarships for higher education students in areas of specialization for which each country has a need.

An agreement to establish a joint higher committee cochaired by the prime ministers of both countries was signed during the visit. The committee's task will be to enhance coordination and consultation between the two countries and to advance and follow up cooperation in the various fields.

The Tunisian prime minister received a warm welcome, on both the popular and the official levels, during his visits to various places in Egypt. This was an expression of Egypt's appreciation of the new era which dawned in Tunisia on 7 November 1987, reflecting Tunisia's Arab and Islamic image and showing the Tunisian people's adherence to their democratic values under their nationalist leadership.

Tunisia showed interest in the leading democratic experience of the Arab Republic of Egypt, particularly the multiple-party system. This system also characterizes the Tunisian democratic experience which accompanied the

7 November shift. Egypt and Tunisia agreed on the importance of the democratic practice in providing the political stability which is indispensable for embarking on general development.

The Tunisian prime minister expressed appreciation for the hospitality that he received, as well as for the special attention he was accorded by President Mubarak, who received him upon his arrival.

Soviet Envoy Meets With 'Abd al-Majid 16 Apr

NC161552 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met with the Soviet ambassador in Cairo today. In a statement after the meeting, the Soviet ambassador said he had handed Dr 'Abd al-Majid a message from Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze on the Soviet Union's views on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in light of the Geneva agreement.

The ambassador called the agreement a step toward resolving the region's problems. He added that no date has yet been set for the Soviet foreign minister's visit to the region. The Soviet ambassador also denounced the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces.

Views U.S. Plan, Afghan Issue

NC151505 Cairo Mena in Arabic 1320 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Cairo, 15 Apr (MENA)—Soviet Ambassador in Cairo Gennadiy Zhuravlev has stated that his country is currently conducting talks and consultations with the United States, Arab and Western countries, and representatives of the Israeli authorities to work out appropriate solutions to the Middle East problem. He affirmed that peaceful negotiations are the sole way to resolve regional disputes.

In exclusive statements to MENA, the Soviet ambassador added that the United States and the USSR are giving special attention to this problem. He pointed out the need to solve this problem through collective efforts and for all parties to recognize each others' interests.

The Soviet ambassador went on to comment on press reports on a recent new Soviet initiative in the Middle East. He said that the idea behind the current Soviet move in the area dates back to 1984, when the Soviet Union proposed an initiative based on revognition of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights and finding a solution to the problem through the efforts of all concerned parties. In this regard he pointed to the changes affecting Soviet-U.S. relations and the situation in the Arab world, as well as the emergence of a new factor: the uprising in the occupied territories. He asserted that all these circumstances dictated changes in stands.

Ambassador Zhuravlev noted that the substance of the 1984 Soviet initiative has not changed. He reiterated the need for convening an international conference for peace in the Middle East with the participation of all parties, including the PLO. He added that the legal groundwork for the talks must be based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, stressing the need for convening the preparatory committee prior to beginning the conference.

Expressing his happiness at the signing of agreements for the solution of the Afghan problem in Geneva, the Soviet ambassador said that if the same method were pursued with regard to the Middle East problem, it would be possible to resolve all regional problems through collective efforts, and to benefit from the Afghanistan lesson.

Touching on the recent tours of the area by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, the Soviet ambassador said that this gave rise to hope, since he has seen for himself the reactions in the Arab world to the proposals aimed at a settlement of the problem. He noted that he agrees with the viewpoint expressed by the U.S. secretary of state when he declared that all that has been achieved during his tour is too little.

Regarding PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's visit to Moscow, the Soviet ambassador said that the talks were held in an atmosphere of understanding, amity, and friendship.

Columnist on Criticism of U.S. Memorandum

JN191155 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 17 April 88 p 1

[Column: "Who Is To Blame?" by Sa'id Sunbul]

[Text] It is the right of every person to think the way he likes. it is also the right of every person to wear spectacles that will make him happy and comfortable and see the world through them according to his own whims.

Some people for instance see the world dark when Egypt draws closer to the Soviet Union and see it bright when it draws closer to the United States. On the other hand, there are others who see the world bright when Egypt draws closer to the Soviets and dark when it fosters its relations with the United States.

If people have the right to think the way they wish, then nobody has the right to invent lies and ask people to believe them.

In last Tuesday's issue, and on the first page, the alliance paper AL-SH'AB published a main article under the title "Provisions of the Secret U.S.-Egyptian Military Agreement".

The paper said verbatim: This agreement affirms military subservience to the United States following economic and political subservience.

What the paper says is clear and frank; that there is a secret agreement and subservience to the United States.

The next day, the Marxist paper AL-AHALI affirmed the same meaning in red banner headlines over eight columns reading: "New Restrictions on Egyptian Sovereignty in the Memo of Understanding Signed by Abu Ghazalah."

So the right has agreed with the left.

People would have believed this talk, were it not for the fact that the Ministry of Defense published the text of the memo of understanding which was signed by Field Marshal Abu Ghazalah with the U.S. side. It is clear from the words of the memo that all talk about subservience and U.S. hegemony is an illusion which does not exist except in the minds of some factions on the right, which had been on the left, and in the minds of some factions on the left which are still on the left.

Field Marshal Abu Ghazalah also did well when he affirmed during the meeting he held last Thursday with the commanders of the field corps and divisions that the agreement does not contain any secret provisions as the opposition press claims.

There was a time when Egypt signed many military agreements with the Soviet Union. The people did not know anything about the contents of these agreements. There was a time also when Egyptian officers and soldiers were not allowed to enter camps, let alone bases, where the Soviet military and experts lived. These camps were on Egyptian soil. This insulting situation existed until it was successfully terminated by the late President Anwar al-Sadat.

I say that when all this was happening we did not hear anything from those who are making a fuss and spreading rumors today, expressing their displeasure with, or even concern over, these secret agreements or the violation of Egyptian sovereignty on its camps.

On the contrary, they blessed the Soviet presence. They welcomed it, supported it, and considered it a victory. Of course it was not a victory for Egypt.

This fuss which is being made by the present and former Marxists would not have happened if the agreement signed by Egypt was with the East rather than the West. So the fault is not in the agreement, but in the direction the agreement takes!

Libya

PLO Leader, Delegation Arrive in Tripoli 19 Apr

Al-Qadhdhafi Meets 'Arafat

JN200944 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0900 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Tripoli last night at the head of a Palestinian delegation at the invitation of Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi. It is the first visit by the PLO Executive Committee chairman to Libya since 1982.

Bassam Abu Sharif, Yasir 'Arafat's information adviser who is accompanying the Palestinian delegation, stated to our radio that the talks between the Libyan and Palestinian sides will begin in Tripoli at noon today. This refutes what the PFLP announced earlier today; namely, that Yasir 'Arafat and the Libyan leader left Tripoli for Damascus this morning.

Leaders Depart for Funeral

NC200756 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0745 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Radio Free Lebanon has exclusive information that PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and Libyan Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi have left Libya for Damascus to attend the funeral of 'Arafat's deputy Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] today. [passage omitted]

U.S. Raid on Iranian Oil Platforms Condemned

LD191630 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1530 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 19 Apr, (JANA)—The People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison has issued a statement on the U.S. imperialist aggression on the Islamic Republic of Iran which states:

The U.S. Administration yesterday carried out new hostile military acts against Iran consisting of the bombardment of Iranian defensive and oil installations, which resulted in heavy material and human losses.

This act comes as a new episode in a series of recurring U.S. imperialist aggressions against the Islamic Republic of Iran that stress the hostile policy and official state terrorism practiced by the U.S. Administration against the peoples of the world.

The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, while stressing its strong and firm stand by the side of Iran in facing the U.S. imperialist aggression, considers this aggression against the sisterly Islamic Republic of Iran as an aggression against all the free peoples and the Islamic world.

The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, while vehemently condemning these unveiled hostile imperialist U.S. acts that reflect the U.S. arrogance and haughtiness, stresses that the aggression does not aim at Iran only, but at all the peaceloving peoples who reject the imperialist U.S. dominance and calls on the free and progressive peoples to support Iran and stand by it in order to face up to the U.S. aggression. Libya urges all the progressive states to endeavor within the United Nations to condemn this aggression and to study the threat to international peace and security.

The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah is aware of the dangerous repercussions of this aggression and has started intensive contacts with the progressive countries and the cuntries of the socialist bloc in order to put an end to the aggression and to deter the aggressor and protect international peace and security.

Al-Qadhdhafi Relative Extends Visit in Cyprus

NC181221 Nicosia ALITHIA TIS DHEVTERAS in Greek 18 Apr 88 pp 1, 5

[Excerpts] A strange visit that poses a number of questions and which has been kept completely secret by all sides is being paid to Cyprus by a Libyan who is closely related to Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and who is a leading member of that government.

Although the visit by the Libyan official has been considered "private" and has not acquired any official nature, he has still been given 24-hour protection by the police. We have been informed that the Libyan, considered one of the most important persons in his country, has stated to the Cyprus Government that his visit is for "recreation" purposes, and that he gave assurances he was only planning to stay in Cyprus for 1 week. However, he has extended his stay for over 2 weeks, the reason for which has yet to be discovered.

This Libyan relation of Al-Qadhdhafi arrived in Cyprus on 31 March on a Libyan Arab Airline plane together with a five-member military and police escort. He was met by a Libyan Embassy official at Larnaca Airport and passed (with a diplomatic pouch) through the VIP area without being inspected.

The Libyan official's arrival has been confirmed by Interior Minister Khristodhoulos Veniamin. He told us some relation of the Libyan leader has really arrived in Cyprus and that the purpose of his visit was reported to the Cyprus Government as "recreation and relaxation."

Responding to our question concerning the security provided by the Cyprus police, Veniamin said that a request for protection was made and that the government acceded even though the purpose of the visit is for recreation.

We have been informed that the Libyan, who according to our information is reportedly a minister, has regular contacts with Libyan Embassy officials at the Limassol hotel where he is staying. He also has contacts almost daily with a foreigner, the purpose of which is not known. [passage omitted]

We have been authoritatively informed that the Libyan leader's relation is accompanied by a major and three other officers of the Libyan Army and police. Originally it was stated that the Libyan was to stay in Cyprus for 1 week, but later he extended his visit for unknown reasons. The 2d week of his stay he was joined at the hotel by two other Libyans. [passage omitted]

Another question that arises regarding the whole visit is the fact that the Libyan official changed hotels. As we have learned, at first he was staying at a hotel at Protaras [seaside resort in Famagusta district], but later he moved to a well-known Limassol hotel where he asked for a large number of rooms and a conference hall. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Al-Mahdi on Government, Ethiopian Refugees

JN200750 Khartoum SUNA in English 0915 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, April 20 (SUNA)—The formation of a broad-based conciliation government was in response to the current political issues which could not be settled without national consensus, Premier Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi disclosed yesterday.

Al-Mahdi interviewed by the ASSOCIATED PRESS pointed out that the said issues were the substitute law of September 1983, the four-year economic recovery programme as well as the proposed constitutional conference.

On Sudan's position towards the expected influx of the Ethiopian refugees into the country, he said Sudan will not receive more refugees in its territories, indicating that contacts are underway with the concerned international circles in this connection.

Tunisia's Baccouche Arrives for 3-Day Visit

Meets Al-Mahdi 14 Apr

LD150905 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Yesterday, on the 1st day of his 3-day official visit to Sudan, Premier Hedi Baccouche met with Sudanese Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi at the headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat of the Council of Ministers.

Upon his arrival in Khartoum yesterday, Hedi Baccouche said at the airport that there is a similarity between the democratic experiment lived by the Sudanese people—which Tunisia is following with interest—and the democratic process that has been confirmed every day since the start of the new era.

Further on Meeting

JN161554 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1430 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Apr (SUNA)—Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has welcomed the country's great guest, Tunisian Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche, who is currently visiting the country. Al-Mahdi lauded the peaceful, democratic change in Tunisia. He pointed out that Sudanese-Tunisian relations have wider scopes of promotion on the bilateral, Arab, African, and Islamic levels as part of the Islamic-Christian dialogue.

Al-Mahdi also explained that the two countries' experience in various fields is worthy of consideration and an exchange of views. Tunisian Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche attended the Constituent Assembly session today, during which Al-Mahdi made a statement on the current political situation in the country.

Meets Party Leaders

EA161542 Omduraman Domestic Service in Arabic 2130 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Tunisian Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche this morning met at his residence with the leaders of some Sudanese parties. His excellency met Badr al-Din Mustafa, secretary of the Arab Ba'th Party Regional Command, who said after the meeting that he had discussed with Tunisia's prime minister the march of democracy in the two countries, its development and strengthening, and the consciousness of the Arab masses concerning this. He also noted that both sides agreed that any path other than that of democracy is weak.

He added that discussions had also touched on the current Arab situation, particularly the Palestinian issue and the Gulf war.

Hedi Baccouche also met leaders of African parties. After the meeting, Father Philip Abbas Ghabbush [former SNP leader] said that they had discussed the war in the south with Tunisia's prime minister.

Meets Al-Mirghani

JN161951 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1445 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Apr (SUNA)—State Council Chairman Ahmad al-Mirghani has received a written message from Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali dealing with enhancing relations between the two countries in all fields.

In his message to Ahmad al-Mirghani, conveyed by visiting Tunisian Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche here today, the Tunisian president stressed his country's readiness to consolidate joint cooperation between the two countries to serve both fraternal peoples and the Arab and Islamic worlds. Al-Mirghani received the country's great guest and his delegation. The State Council hosted a luncheon at the palace in his honor.

Al-Mirghani Sends Condolences on Al-Wazir

EA190510 Khartoum SUNA in English 1624 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, Apr 8 (SUNA)—Chairman of the Council of State Ahmed al-Mirghani has sent a condolence cable to Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat on the assassination of deputy general commander of the Palestinian forces and member of Fatah Central Committee Khalil al-Wazir, Abu Jihad, who was killed in Tunis last Saturday.

Somali Minister Delivers Message to Al-Mirghani

EA150912 Mogadishu Domestic Service in Somali 1700 GMT 14 Apr 88

[Text] Dr Mohamed Ali Hamud, Somali Democratic Republic [SDR] minister of state for foreign affairs, who is currently on an official tour of several Arab countries, delivered a message yesterday to the chairman of the Sudanese State Council, Mr Ahmad al-Mirghani, from Challe Mohamed Siad Barre, the SDR president, in Khartoum.

During their meeting, Dr Mohamed Ali Hamud and Mr Ahmad al-Mirghani discussed bilateral matters, especially how best to strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation and the current situation in the Horn of Africa and the Arab world at large.

Dr Mohamed Ali Hamud, the SDR Minister of state for foreign affairs, also had talks with Sudanese Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and Sudanese Foreign Minister Ma'mun Sanadah. The SDR minister of state and the Sudanese leaders discussed relations and cooperation between Somalia and Sudan, the Horn of Africa, and issues of the Arab world.

Al-Mahdi Criticizes Bank Employees Strike

JN161953 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1433 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Apr (SUNA)—In his statement before the Constituent Assembly today, Prime Minister al-Mahdi criticized the strike staged by bank employees. He said this strike prevented the country from meeting its financial obligations, which will secure the receipt of new aid in excess of $60 million.

His excellency reasserted that the government will not make partial settlements on the issue of wages and will only tackle this issue within the framework of social security. He also lauded the trade unions that attentively work to tackle such problems within a wider national framework.

Employees of the Sudanese public banks have been on a week-long strike since last Tuesday [day as received] to protest the failure to meet their demands on improving their wages.

Al-Banna Holds Press Conference in Nairobi

JN131743 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1450 GMT 13 Apr 88

[Text] Nairobi, 13 Apr (SUNA)—Deputy State Council Chairman Idris al-Banna has described his East Africa tour as very successful. He added that during the tour he had the chance to discuss bilateral and regional issues with the presidents of Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya.

Al-Banna indicated in a news conference held here today that the Sudanese Government has always advocated and will continue to advocate the peace option, since this will help preserve the country's unity. He said Sudan's efforts to resolve the southern Sudan issue were met with a favorable response and an understanding by the East African states' leaders. He described their stands toward the southern Sudan war as neutral.

Al-Banna affirmed these leaders' desire to lend all types of support to Sudan to help it establish peace. He added that all strata of the Sudanese people, including the Armed Forces, believe the resolution of the problem lies in peaceful negotiations. He added that the government is awaiting a positive response from the SPLA and SPLM regarding the convening of a constitutional conference which is expected to be held this year. Al-Banna indicated that the differences in Sudan are not base on ethnicity.

SPLA Claims 'Successful' Raid on Juba Airport

EA161516 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Some news just in, headquarters of SPLA forces of Bright Star Campaign carried out a successful raid into Juba airport yesterday, 15 April 1988, and destroyed one military aircraft on the ground, using explosives. SPLA forces have been placed in several areas of Juba town over the last 2 months.

The spokesman of the SPLA military high command has again repeated the warning to the civilian population in Juba town to evacuate to the SPLA-controlled areas and to help the SPLA in identifying the military installations and other military targets.

Rebels Reportedly Kill 100 Government Troops

EA150919 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 14 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Combined SPLA force of Bee, Shark, Zalaan, Tuqhian, Winch, and Munshar Battalions, under the direct operational command of Captain Edward Achunyi Dao and the overall command of Commander Daniel Aweit Akuot, alternate member of SPLM/SPLA political-military high command and zonal commander of northern Bahr al-Ghazal, made a successful ambush on the huge enemy convoy of 153 vehicles from Battalion 281, from 7th to 11th April 1988 on Uwayl-Waw road about 21 miles away from Waw at (Get) station.

The enemy suffered very heavy casualties in manpower and widespread damages in materials. Over 100 enemy soldiers were killed, 5 of whom were identified as follows: Lieutenant Colonel Ibrahim Husayn Jalal al-Din, military No 5869, he was the deputy commander of the convoy; Sergeant Adam Ibrahim Sulayman, military No 372212; Corporal Hashim Ahmad, military No 632118; Private Angelo Jumah Kayango from eastern Equatoria; and Corporal Sallah al-din Muhammad Abdullah, Military No 77007. The following two were captured: Private Ring Bol Lou and policeman Jumah Baharo Maluot, and scores of others were injured.

Radio SPLA correspondent in Northern Bahr al-Ghazal says that 23 enemy vehicles were captured and destroyed lately. [passage omitted] Correspondent says that the other vehicles, including 15 relief vehicles, were loaded with ammunition. [passage omitted]

In this regard, the SPLA zonal commander of northern Bahr al-Ghazal, Cdr Daniel Aweit Akuot, has warned Sadiq al-Mahdi's Army commander in Bahr al-Ghazal, General Abu Qurun, against misleading the Sudanese Soldiers to die for no cause while he, Abu Qurun, is trading. Enough is enough; stop picking innocent soldiers to die in futile attempt to relieve your starving garrisons, Cdr Daniel Aweit Akuot warned Gen Abu Qurun.

Meanwhile, the SPLA Commander in Chief, John Garang de Mabior, has sent warm revolutionary congratulations to Cdr Daniel Aweit Akuot, officers, NCO'S, and men of Bahr al-Ghazal administrative area for this magnificent victory.

Tunisia

Emergency UN Meeting on Al-Wazir Killing Asked

LD200136 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Yesterday [19 April] Tunisia officially asked the UN Security Council to hold an emergency meeting to look into the assassination last Saturday on Tunisian soil of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], the second man in the Fatah organization.

Tunisia's permanent representative at the United Nations, Ahmed Ghezal, has addressed a letter to the current chairman of the Security Council requesting an emergency meeting of the Security Council and urging the 15 members of the Council to condemn Israeli terrorism and adopt necessary measures to prevent the repetition of such an act.

In his letter, Ahmed Ghezal included the results of inquiries by the national committee, which prove that Israel committed aggression against an independent country and violated its territorial safety and sovereignty. Ahmed Ghezal's letter said Tunisia was once again the target of international terrorism continually practiced by Israel pompously and [word indistinct].

Libya's Al-Humaydi Arrives, Meets 'Arafat

LD191548 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1455 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Tunis, 19 Apr, JANA—Major Al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi has presented the condolences of the Libyan Arab people over the martyr of the Arab nation, fighter Khalil al-Wazir, who was assassinated by Zionism and U.S. imperialism, to Brother Yasir 'Arafat and the martyr's family.

Major al-Humaydi participated in a ceremony to send off the body of the martyr which took place this morning at Carthage International Airport in Tunis.

Major al-Humaydi arrived this morning at Carthage International Airport in Tunis, where he was welcomed by Brothers Mahmoud Mestiri, the Tunisian foreign minister; Habib Ammar, the Tunisian interior minister; Slaheddine Bali, the Tunisian justice minister; and a number of high-ranking Tunisian party and government officials.

Following the ceremony to send off the martyr, a meeting was held between Brother Major al-Humaydi and Brother Yasir 'Arafat at the headquarters of the permanent delegation of the great Jamahiriyah to the Arab League. During this meeting, which lasted more than 2 hours, Major al-Humaydi presented the condolences of the Libyan Arab people and the brother leader of the revolution to the Palestinian Arab people and the Arab nation over the martyrdom of Khalil al-Wazir, Abu Jihad. The dimensions of the U.S.-Zionist conspiracy against the Palestinian revolution and the Arab nation and the support of the uprising led by the generation of anger in occupied Palestine were reviewed during this meeting. [passage omitted]

Intra-Gulf Affairs

AFP: Iranian Speedboats Attack Cypriot Tanker
NC181713 Paris AFP in English 1700 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Manama, april 18 (AFP)—Iranian speedboats attacked a Cypriot tanker laden with oil for the Philippines Monday as it sailed through the Strait of Hormuz at the southern entrance to the Gulf, regional shipping sources said.

Shortly after the attack against the "Omnium Pride," the Iranian speedboats opened fire, for the second time Monday, on the British tanker "York Marine," the sources added. It was not immediately known if the attack against the "Omnium Pride" had caused any casualties. The Cypriot tanker took on a load of oil at the Abu Dhabi port of Al-Ruways and was headed for the Philippines when it was hit, the sources said.

The "York Marine" was targeted by Iranian fire earlier in the day, forcing its crew to abandon ship, the sources added. The maritime insurers, Lloyds of London, reported earlier that the 112,744-tonne "York Marine" was set on fire during the first attack, with part of its shipment spilling out.

Gunboats Set UAE Tanker Ablaze
LD191434 Kuwait KUNA in English 1352 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Dubayy, April 19 (KUNA)—A UAE-flagged tanker Tuesday was set ablaze in the southern Gulf when Iranian gunboats opened fire on it, shipping sources said. The sources said that the 12,125 ton Fal V, believed to be loaded was bound for the UAE port of Fujayrah outside the Gulf when the Iranian gunboats blasted it.

The Iranian attacks was the first of its kind since two Iranian oil platforms were bombed by U.S. planes yesterday. They said that losses as a result of the Iranian attack on the Sharjah-registered vessel were unknown.

Italian Mine-Sweepers Find Two Mines in Gulf
AU191147 Rome ANSA in English 1032 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Excerpts] (ANSA) Nicosia, April 19—Italian minesweepers operating in the Persian Gulf found two sea mines in international waters off the Iranian island of Farsi, Italy's ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, Enrico de Maio, said Monday.

Over the telephone to the ANSA office here, the ambassador affirmed that the mines had been discovered Monday morning and that he was informed of the discovery by the commander of Italy's Gulf task force, Admiral Angelo Mariani. [passage omitted]

Ambassador de Maio added that the two minesweepers were "still at work" and that they were under the escort of an Italian frigate with Admiral Mariani on board. Two other Italian frigates are in the Gulf escorting Italian merchant ships, but reported no incidents Monday.

Kuwait

'Source' Says Iran Makes Scud Missile Attack
LD201014 Kuwait KUNA in English 0958 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, April 20 (KUNA)—Iran attacked "one of Kuwait's areas" at 03:15 local time today using a 'Scud'-type missile, an official source at the Kuwaiti Defense Ministry announced. The official added Kuwait has the full right to take what it sees appropriate toward this new aggression, directed against its territories and its safety.

Kuwait affirms that the continuation of such repeated attacks enforces Kuwait's determination to abide by its principled stance, the official added.

No Damage to Oil Field
JN201009 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1002 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] A few moments ago we learned that Iran fired a missile at Kuwait this morning and that it fell near the Al-Wafrah oil field. Rashid 'Abd al-'Aziz, Kuwaiti minister of state for cabinet affairs, said the missile did not claim any casualties or cause any damage.

Use of Bubiyan Island for Military Action Denied
LD191825 Kuwait KUNA in English 1744 GMT 19 Apr 88

[All quotation marks as received]

[Text] United Nations, April 19 (KUNA)—Kuwait Tuesday again categorically denied allegations in the Iranian news media that the Kuwaiti island of Bubiyan is being used for military action against Iranian forces occupying the Iraqi Al-Faw peninsula.

"Kuwait's policy is firmly opposed to allowing any military power to exist within or to use its territory, waters or air space," Kuwait's permanent representative Muhammad A. Abu al-Hasan said in a letter addressed to Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

While reiterating its unequivocal denial of what the official Iranian news media have alleged—a denial that has been transmitted to the Iranian Government in a formal manner directly through the diplomatic channels—Kuwait hopes that the official Iranian news media will refrain from repeating these charges," Abu al-Hasan said.

"Such accusations are both serious and groundless: They imply a direct threat to Kuwait and constitute a pretext for a new attack, thereby exacerbating the situation in the region and endangering its security and stability," he said.

Abu al-Hasan said he hopes the secretary-general would do his utmost to prevent a deterioration of the situation in the region.

'Deep Content' Expressed Over Al-Faw Recapture

LD200922 Kuwait KUNA in English 0821 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, April 20 (KUNA)—Kuwait Wednesday expressed deep content over Iraq regaining the Al-Faw peninsula from Iranian troops, condemned Iranian attacks on oil installations of the UAE and called [words indistinct] to heed peace calls.

Kuwait hopes that the recapturing of Al-Faw port at the mouth of the Gulf would help nudge peace efforts in the area and restore stability to the region, a Foreign Ministry Spokesman said this morning.

Al-Faw, an Iraqi disused port south of Basra was seized by Iran in February 1986 and recovered by Iraq in a fierce battle two days ago.

The spokesman, however, said Kuwait "strongly condemns" the Iranian attacks on the Mubarak oil field of the United Arab Emirates last Monday and on the UAE oil tanker Fal-5 as well as other repeated aggressions on commercial ships in the Gulf.

"Kuwait, which is watching the military flare-up in the Gulf waters with deep concern, also condemns repeated threats against non-belligerent countries in the Gulf region," he said.

Iran earlier in the week alleged that Kuwait was allowing Iraqi forces to use the Kuwaiti Bubiyan Island as a staging point for attacks on Iran, a charge which Kuwait flatly denied. Kuwait Tuesday alerted the United Nations that Iran could use the allegation as a pretext to attack Kuwait.

The spokesman who was commenting on the recent military action in the Gulf earlier in the week said "Kuwait believes that such aggressive actions, including mine-laying in the international Gulf waters, constitute a flagrant violation of international laws and norms and endanger freedom of shipping in this international waterway."

The Foreign Ministry spokesman renewed Kuwait's support for all efforts aimed at securing safety of navigation in the Gulf and halting attacks on commercial ships in the international waters. He said the recent developments in the Gulf and the menace they posed to peace in the region were but "natural consequences" of the continuation of the Iran-Iraq war and Iran's repeated rejection of peace calls.

"Kuwait, in this holy month, calls on its Muslim neighbor Iran to respond to peace and goodwill efforts and to accept implementation of Security Council Resolution 598 which embodies the world's desire for an honorable and fair settlement of this lethal conflict," the spokesman concluded.

Algeria Thanked for Efforts To End Hijacking

LD201131 Kuwait Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] The Kuwaiti Council of Ministers held an extraordinary meeting this morning under the chairmanship of his highness the heir apparent and chairman of the Council of Ministers, Shaykh Sa'd al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah. Following the meeting, Rashid 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Rashid, minister of state for cabinet affairs, stated that the Council reviewed the latest details concerning the results of the good and urgent efforts made by the officials in fraternal Algeria whose success led to the ending of the crisis of the Kuwaiti hijacked airliner in the form of the release of all the passengers and crew of the airliner who were held hostage.

On this occasion the Council sent a cable to his highness the amir, may God preserve him, in which it expressed its praise of and gratitude to God Almighty for this good outcome of the tragic tribulation that Kuwait experienced in the past 15 days. The council also expressed his profound thanks and appreciation for the (?noble) directives and wise leadesrhip of his highness and for the personal contacts and efforts he made which had a profound effect on the outcome of this crisis and ending it in the manner which we hoped for.

The Council also heard a statement by his highness the heir apparent and chairman of the Council of Ministers in which he congratulated the noble Kuwaiti people on the safety of the hostages who have been released and the brave stance taken by the people in solidarity with their leadership vis-a-vis the crime of hijacking the airliner. This stand embodies the natural cohesion and unity of the sons of the homeland vis-a-vis the tribulations, thus setting the most glorious example to all peoples of the world by standing fast against terrorism and rejecting blackmail.

At its meeting the Council expressed its profound gratitude for all the tireless efforts made by officials in fraternal Algeria at all levels, led by His Excellency President Chadli Bendjedid, which were crowned with success. The Council praised the big role played by officials of the PLO, led by Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee. The Council also saluted all the efforts and positive attitudes made and expressed by fraternal and friendly states vis-a-vis the tragic tribulation that Kuwait experienced.

The Council also noted that Kuwait, while in the midst of its rejoicing over the safety of its sons and the victory of the brave Kuwaiti steadfastness which rejected terrorism in all its types and forms, will continue to recall with much pride its two faithful martyrs 'Abdallah al-Khaldi and Khalid 'Ayyub, who were assassinated by the hands of treachery and terrorism and who will remain a symbol of patriotism and faithfulness. Do not consider those who were killed for the sake of God as dead but alive with their God. [Koranic verse]

Hizballah, 'Drug Barons' Linked To Hijacking

LD201200 Kuwait KUNA in English 1114 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Paris, April 20 (KUNA)—The hijacking of the Kuwaiti airliner, which came to an end this morning, was made possible by a recent pact between the pro-Iranian Hizballah Party in Lebanon, drug barons in Bangkok and corrupt elements in the Thai police, revealed Western terrorism experts in a specialized publication.

The Middle East defense news bi-weekly, MEDNEWS, quoted these experts as saying Hizballah is working hand in hand with Thai and Chinese drug barons since last year "through the Hizballah international drug sales network."

MEDNEWS pointed out that Thai police had found no stolen badges for airport staff thus increasing suspicion that cleaning workers smuggled hand guns into the plane during its 15 hour stop-over in Bangkok airport.

The publication, which has close links to Western intelligence sources, said that the international drug trade may soon supplant Iran as Hizballah's primary source of income. The head of the drug trading band is Imad Mughaniyah, who is also believed to be responsible for hijacking another Kuwaiti airplane to Tehran in 1984.

Saudi Arabia

'Source' Disputes Iranian Claims on Pilgrimage

LD192222 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2105 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Riyadh 19 Apr (SPA)—Tehran radio today said that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had announced that it would not allow 150,000 Iranian pilgrims to perform the pilgrimage this year. The radio claimed that the Kingdom had approved conditions regarding the travel of 150,000 Iranian pilgrims and the organization of marches prior to the departure of the Iranian pilgrimage delegation to the Kingdom. In response to these claims, an official source has told SPA that what the radio said concerning the prior approval of Iranian conditions is absolutely unfounded and untrue.

The source added: As for the Kingdom not allowing the number which Iran is insisting on and the Kingdom's categorical refusal of the organization of marches or any practices that violate the teachings of the pilgrimage, the Kingdom would like to point out the following:

First: The Kingdom had previously informed the Iranian Government, through diplomatic channels, of its clear attitude vis-a-vis the reduction of the number of pilgrims from all the Islamic states, including Iran, and the total banning of marches. This was done prior to the departure of the Iranian delegation to the Kingdom.

Second: The Kingdom received the Iranian delegation led by Mr Emami-Jamarani at an official request from the Iranian Government to discuss the usual arrangements for receiving the Iranian pilgrims, as is the case with regard to the other Islamic delegations which usually arrive in the Kingdom around this time to discuss pilgrimage arrangements with officials.

Third: The leader of the Iranian delegation asked his excellency the minister of pilgrimage affairs and religious trusts to respond to three requests:

1. To accept 150,000 Iranian pilgrims for the 1988 pilgrimage season.

2. To accept the staging of demonstrations and marches in the two holy cities of Mecca and Madinah.

3. If the two requests are not approved the delegation will return to Iran to announce that the Kingdom has prevented the Iranian pilgrims from performing the pilgrimage this year.

Fourth: His excellency the minister of pilgrimage affairs and religious trusts answered that the Kingdom cannot exclude the pilgrims of Iran from regulating the number for this year as this matter was agreed upon with the Islamic countries in accordance with a resolution of the 17th conference of Islamic foreign ministers, members of the Islamic Conference Organization, which was held in Amman and which was attended by an Iranian delegate.

He heard for himself the consensus of the Islamic nation on banning obscenity, depravity, and controversy, such as processions, demonstrations, chantings, the carrying of flags and pictures, and obstruction of worship at the two holy mosques because this does not agree with the sanctity, morals, and teachings of the pilgrimage since it was imposed by God on the Islamic nation and until this day and does not achieve security and safety at the two holy mosques during the pilgrimage.

Fifth, in light of these resolutions, and in view of the fact that the Kingdom has worked for months on projects aimed at widening the regions surrounding the two holy mosques and removing the small old houses to replace them with huge buildings costing tens of billions of riyals to absorb the biggest number of pilgrims whose numbers are growing year by year, and in line with the desire of the Islamic nation, the Kingdom asked, as a temporary measure for several years, the reduction of the number of the pilgrims arriving in the Kingdom from all the Islamic countries this year, until the completion of the expansion projects, by the ratio of 1,000 pilgrims for every 1 million of population in every Islamic country.

From the premise of this equal ratio approved by all, his excellency the minister of pilgrimage affairs and religious trusts informed the leader of the Iranian delegation, Mr Emami-Jamarani, that the Kingdom will welcome 45,000 Iranian pilgrims this year, like the other Islamic countries without exception.

The source went on to say: The Iranian delegation, however, refused to accept this resolution and considered it directed against Iran and Tehran radio announced today that the Kingdom had prevented the Iranians from performing the pilgrimage this year.

If Iran does not desire the arrival of its citizens for the pilgrimage and seeks excuses and pretexts, this is its own affair. If it wants to stir up disorder, obstruct worship, and spoil the atmosphere of the pilgrimage for the Muslims, as happened during last year's pilgrimage, this matter is rejected, banned, and settled by the consensus of the Islamic nation.

The source ended its statement: The measures taken by the Kingdom in this respect stem from its lasting concern for the comfort of the pilgrims and the desire to enable them to perfrom their religious duty with ease, amid calm and tranquillity, and in comfort.

Chinese, South Koreans Help Build Missile Site

SK190231 Seoul THE KOREA HERALD in English 19 Apr 88 p 2

[Text] Chinese arms experts and a South Korean construction company cooperated in installing CSS-2 intermediate range missiles at a Saudi Arabian military base, KYODO News Agency reported Saturday, quoting U.S. diplomatic sources from Washington.

The sources revealed that Saudi Arabia had been pushing for the purchase of CSS-2 missiles since 1986.

The missiles which Saudi Arabia procured from China secretly were installed on the outskirts of Riyadh with the cooperation of Chinese experts and engineers of a South Korean construction company, the sources said.

The company once mobilized seven or eight trucks for the construction of facilities including launching pads. But the sources declined elaboration on how many missiles were installed or whether they were made operational. They declined to name the Korean company.

KYODO reported the U.S. government plans to ask the Korean government for an explanation of the missile installation. It added that the collaboration between China and Korea was noteworthy because it suggests a new development in Sino-Korean relations.

United Arab Emirates

Iranian Attack on Oil Installations Condemned

JN191950 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1901 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 19 Apr (WAKH)—The UAE has condemned the aggression against the Mubarak oil field in the Arabian Gulf by certain vessels of the Iranian Navy Monday. This aggression resulted in human casualties and serious material damage to the field's oil installations.

The condemnation was made by an official UAE Foreign Ministry source today. The source said: "The UAE affirms its right to take all appropriate measures to safeguard its rights, security, and sovereignty."

Following is the text of the statement:

At about 1215 [0815 GMT] on Monday 2 Ramadan 1408 Hegira corresponding to 18 April 1988 a platform in the UAE's Mubarak oil field in the Arabian Gulf was attacked by some vessels of the Iranian Navy. The attack resulted in human casualties and serious material damage to the field's oil installations.

The UAE condemns this unjustifiable attack on its economic installations because it conflicts with the policy of goodneighborliness and is contrary to international norms and conventions which affirm the need to respect the sovereignty and independence of states. The UAE also declares its complete rejection and strong condemnation of such attacks and affirms its right to take all appropriate measures to safeguard its rights, security, and sovereignty.

Official Meets Iranian, U.S., French Envoys

JN192109 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1857 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 19 Apr (WAKH)—Shaykh Hamdan ibn Zayid, under secretary of the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, met in Abu Dhabi this evening with Mostafa Haeri-Fumani, Iranian ambassador to the UAE. During the meeting they reviewed the latest developments in the Gulf region.

Shaykh Hamdan also met with U.S. Ambassador to the UAE David Lyle Mack. During the meeting they discussed the latest developments in the region in general and the aggression perpetrated against the oil platform of the Mubarak oilfield which belongs to the UAE in particular.

Shaykh Zayid also met with French Ambassador to the UAE (Hubert Kolin de Verdier) and discussed with him the latest developments in the Gulf region in general and the aggression against the Mubarak oilfield in particular.

Saddam Husayn Visits Saudi Arabia, Returns Home

JN200544 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0500 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Leader President Saddam Husayn visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia yesterday. The president was accompanied by RCC Vice Chairman 'Izzat Ibrahim, RCC members, comrade members of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command, the head of the president's office, the president's secretary, and the Baghdad mayor.

Upon arrival at Jeddah at 1315 Baghdad time, the president was received by His Highness Prince Majid ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, governor of the Mecca region, and a number of officials there. The delegation then left for Mecca to visit the holy mosque to thank God for His victory and to perform the minor pilgrimage. After performing the minor pilgrimage, the delegation left for Al-Madinah to visit Prophet Muhammad's tomb. [passage omitted]

Leader President Saddam Husayn and the accompanying delegation then left for Riyadh. He was received at Riyadh Airport by His Majesty Saudi King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz. [passage omitted]

Leader President Saddam Husayn and His Majesty King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz held a meeting which was permeated by a fraternal atmosphere. King Fahd and members of the Saudi delegation to the meeting expressed their delight and congratulated the leader president and the delegation accompanying him on the great victory achieved by the Iraqi Armed Forces in liberating the city of Al-Faw in the "Blessed Ramadan" operations. [passage omitted]

Leader President Saddam Husayn and the accompanying delegation, which includes members of the RCC and the Ba'th Party Regional Command, returned to Baghdad early this morning at the end of their visit to Saudi Arabia.

Reportage on Gulf War Combat Activities

Communique No 3,149

JN191740 Bagdhad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,149 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 19 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. With God's help and with the resolve of the zealous men of the military industries and the Al-Husayn Missile Force, the following missile strikes have been carried out:

1. At 2201 [1801 GMT] last night, the 113th missile strike was carried out against the city of Qom.

2. At 0105 today [2105 GMT on 18 April], the 114th missile strike using the Al-Husayn missiles was dealt to the city of Esfahan.

3. At 0615 today, the 115th missile strike was dealt to the city of Shiraz.

4. At 1048 today, the Al-Husayn Missile Force carried out its 116th strike against the city of Tehran.

Blessed be the bold men. God is He who grants resolve and success.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 19 April 1988

Communique No 3,150

JN191819 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1705 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,150 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 19 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The following is a roundup of our troops' activities for last night and today:

1. Our daring helicopter gunships carried out 107 combat sorties inflicting significant losses on enemy scoundrels, weapons, and vehicles, having flown these sorties, all of our helicopter gunships returned safely to base, God be praised.

2. At 1145 [0745 GMT] today, two enemy F-5 planes which tried to violate our international borders on the warfront of the heroic VII Army Corps were downed by the men of our antiaircraft defenses which are attached to our VII Army Corps. One of these planes fell in our territory while the other fell on the other bank of the river in front of the heroic soldiers of the VII Army Corps. May God bless the endeavors of proud men. God be praised for this victory.

3. At 1155 today, one F-5 plane which tried to cross the Shatt al-'Arab was downed by the men of our antiaircraft defenses which are attached to the heroic Presidential Guard Force. May God bless these men. March on.

4. One of our heroic naval units spotted an enemy maritime target yesterday. It dealt the target a blow and destroyed it. Blessed be the hands of the courageous Navy men.

5. Two shovels [preceding word in English] and one machinegun were destroyed and two enemy vehicles were burned and destroyed in the I Army Corps northern sector. Furthermore, four enemy personnel were killed in the II Army Corps central sector.

6. The vile Khomeyniites used long-range artillery last night and today to shell residential quarters in the cities of Basra, Al-Sulaymaniyah, and Khanaqin. The enemy

shelling martyred and wounded a number of civilians, including women and children. The enemy shelling also damaged a number of houses. May mercy be the lot of our martyrs and may swift recovery be the lot of our wounded, God willing.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 19 April 1988

Spokesman Denies Plane Downed

JN191904 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1848 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Apr (INA)—The Iraq military spokesman has denied Iranian allegations on the downing of an Iraqi Sukhoi plane in in the Al-Faw area yesterday morning. In a statement to INA tonight, the spokesman said that the allegations propagated by the Iranian rulers are entirely baseless lies. He added that all of our planes which carried out their tasks in the Al-Faw and other sectors returned safely to base.

Attack Claim Denied

JN192027 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2002 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Apr (INA)—An Iraqi military spokesman has denied Iran's allegation about a surprise attack in northern Iraq last night and today.

In a statement to INA tonight the spokesman said what happened was a small battle in which the Iranians sustained losses. He said it was no more than a border skirmish. The spokesman explained that by making such false allegations the Iranians are trying to diminish the historic defeat inflicted on them in the Al-Faw battle.

The spokesman said that such lies are not the first Iran makes and will not be the last. He asserted that public opinion now knows such methods of resorting to lies and does not pay any attention to what the Iranian regime says.

Iranian Planes Raid Irbil

JN200711 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0600 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Apr (INA)—Two Iranian planes raided residential areas in Irbil Governorate, northern Iraq, at 0651 [0251 GMT] today. In a statement to INA, an Iraqi military spokesman said that the incident martyred or wounded several civilians, including women, children, and old people, and damaged other civilian property.

Papers Comment on 'Liberation' of Al-Faw

JN191058 Baghdad INA in English 1010 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad, April 19, INA—AL-THAWRAH Iraqi paper today described liberation of Al-Faw as one of the great national and patriotic victories, saying "it is one of the important military accomplishments realized by Iraq during years of the war."

The daily, organ of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, said, in a leading article published here, what happened to the Iranian regime in Al-Faw yesterday was not a military defeat only, but a military, political and psychological catastrophe. It was a wide-scale breakdown that the rulers of Iran could not justify or explain to their people.

Liberating Al-Faw from the Iranians, AL-THAWRAH stressed, was a qualitative change in the just, defensive war being fought by Iraq. After-effects and outcome of Iraq's victory in Al-Faw would have an impact on developments of the war and its future prospects, the daily added.

The lesson taught to the rulers of Iran in Al-Faw was clear, deep and bitter enough to convince those impostors that it was useless to persist in war, because by doing so they were practically insisting on bringing about more disasters and destruction upon their people, AL-THAWRAH noted.

Liberation of Al-Faw "does not mean that Iraq would forget its commitments and principles. Iraq is still fully ready to cooperate to implement Security Council Resolution in its sequential order to arrive at a peaceful and just settlement to the dispute," AL-THAWRAH stressed.

Were the rulers of Iran sensible enough, AL-THAWRAH added, they would have accepted the international resolution and responded to the international will, unanimously agreed on the necessity of ending the war and establishing peace.

AL-JUMHURIYAH paper, in an article devoted to liberation of Al-Faw reiterated today "Tehran rulers have one option open to them; namely: peace."

The daily continued by saying that the only solution "is frank and documented approval by the rulers of Iran of Security Council Resolution No. 598 and acceptance to implement it fully and according to the sequence of its operative articles...otherwise, the destiny awaiting them is gloomier and worse than what they are getting now," the paper said.

Reviewing peace opportunities offered to Iran by Iraq, AL-JUMHURIYAH said the devil used the rulers of Iran and obscured their insight so they mistakenly believed that "our call for peace emanates from weakness." They believed that their occupation of Al-Faw would open doors of Iraq and the Arab Peninsula wide in front of them, hence they dared to flagrantly threaten Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the paper added.

AL-JUMHURIYAH said heros of the Republican Guards and those of the Iraqi Army 7th Corps liberated Al-Faw and the whole triangle at a record time. The paper continued "Al-Faw is Iraq's trump card and we have know this thing a long time ago."

3-Day Closure, Total Blockade on Territories

TA200513 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew
20 Apr 88 p 1

[Report by Shmu'el Tal and Oren Kohen]

[Excerpt] The IDF closed all the exits from the territories from midnight last night, and residents of the territories will not be permitted to cross into Israel until Thursday night. The total blockade is similar to that imposed on Land Day and the Arab residents are also banned from moving from one region to another. The widespread curfew on the refugee camps will continue on Independence Day. The IDF has banned the transportation of food from Israel to the camps. [passage omitted]

Gaza Strip Closed 'Until Further Notice'

TA200428 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
0400 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] As of this morning, the Gaza Strip has been closed off by the security forces and local inhabitants are not allowed within the boundaries of the Green Line. The ban will remain in effect until further notice.

Yesterday, the Civilian Administration closed all Gaza Strip schools for 1 week. A military source told our correspondent Moti Amir that these are preemptive measures in anticipation of Abu Jihad's [Khalil al-Wazir] funeral in Damascus today and of Israel's Independence Day.

Samarian Dies of IDF Wounds Inflicted 19 Apr

TA191916 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1900 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] A resident of the village of Faqqu'ah in Samaria, who was injured by IDF gunfire shots yesterday, died of his wounds. This is reported by our correspondent Arye Gus. An IDF unit deployed in Faqqu'ah yesterday when a building in the village was being torn down. After the demolition, the soldiers were attacked. Two local residents were injured in the clash, and one of them died of his wounds today.

2 Soldiers Sentenced in Arab 'Beating Affair'

TA200857 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew
20 Apr 88 p 11

[Report by Ran Gefen]

[Excerpt] A Central Command military tribunal yesterday convicted two of the three soldiers indicted in the Arab-beating affair in Nabulus which developed in the wake of the CBS television network film.

The judges wrote in their verdict that "this is one of the hardest cases in which to decide on a suitable punishment." Captain Yosi Hadad was given a 2-month suspended sentence, and Corporal Yehuda Angel was given a 3-month suspended sentence and demoted to the rank of private.

The trial of the third accused in the affair, Sagi Harpaz, will start soon. He is represented by attorney Uri Slonim. It was decided yesterday to separate the trials.

The attorney representing the military prosecutor, Shay Yaniv, announced that Angel and Hadad admitted to the charges after the sides reached a plea bargaining agreement. In the deal, the charges of maltreatment and attack were changed. Hadad was charged with behavior unbecoming an officer and Angel was charged with disgraceful behavior. [passage omitted]

Mitzna' Views IDF Steps To Suppress Violence

TA191746 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1605 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] The IDF took a series of steps after it learned of the death of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]. The result was that the expressions of mourning did not turn into 3 days of demonstrations and riots. This was said by Major General 'Amram Mitzna', commander of the Central Command, in a talk with our correspondent Arye Gus.

[Begin recording] [Gus] General Mitzna', 3 days after Abu Jihad's murder—3 days of mourning in the territories, 3 days of a general commercial strike in Judaea and Samaria—what influence did it have?

[Mitzna'] First of all we began to act on Saturday, after the news was reported. To summarize what happened that Saturday, I would say that people who took to the streets conducted mostly spontaneous reactions. In several places there were large disturbances. I think that in most places the reactions were spontaneous, and in general nonviolent. We immediately took all the means at our disposal to make sure that even what we consider a legitimate reaction would not be converted into wild violence and would not become the start of a new wave of violence. Today we are in the 3d day of the strike and mourning, and I believe we succeeded in preventing the mourning from turning into a violent demonstration.

[Gus] What is happening at present in Judaea and Samaria has been termed a suppressed strike or suppressed riots. Will it not erupt again when you lift the curfews imposed on 15 refugee camps and 3 towns?

[Mitzna'] One must look at the big picture. If we analyze the situation over the past 4 weeks, it seems to me that the unrest is in constant decline, which is partly the result of suppression and partly the result of solutions and means that provide answers in the longer run.

Therefore I call it a definite decline, while from time to time there are outbreaks. My evaluation is that the process of decline will continue, although we can expect outbreaks here and there.

[Gus] The fact that the mayor of Nabulus announced his intention to resign shows that the influence of the Unified National Command of the Uprising or extremist elements is still very strong in the field.

[Mitzna'] There is no doubt that the resignation of the Nabulus mayor would have an influence beyond the localized problem of Nabulus. We are trying to pinpoint the problem. The Nabulus mayor has been swaying for some time. It appears to me that his resignation is linked not only to pressures in the field by what is called the Unified Command. It is also linked to his personality, his abilities, and his personal feelings. Of course, from a symbolic point of view there is a danger, and this is part of the ups and downs I referred to and with which we have to deal. I hope it will not turn into a wave of unrest. I believe we can say it will not. [end recording]

Arab Secretariat Condemns Al-Wazir Killing

TA190810 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 19 Apr 88 p 1

[Report by David Rudge]

[Text] Shefar'am—Israeli Arab leaders yesterday rejected calls to declare a national day of mourning for assassinated PLO military commander Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir].

The decision was made at a special meeting here of the Secretariat of the National Committee of Arab Local Councils, despite widespread anger over Abu Jihad's killing and the subsequent deaths in the territories.

The participants maintained that according to Arab tradition it was not normal practice to mourn for somebody who had died as a martyr in the struggle for (Palestinian) freedom.

They also turned down demands to convene a meeting of the monitoring committee, which organized the recent Land Day strike and last December's "Peace Day" strike.

The calls for a day of mourning and further nationwide action to protest the government's handling of the uprising in the territories had been made by MK [Knesset Member] Muhammad Mi'ari and members of his party, the Progressive List for Peace.

The Secretariat did, however, issue a statement condemning the killing of Abu Jihad, and describing the assassination as a serious blow to peace. The members decided to send a delegation to pay a condolence call on members of Abu Jihad's family in Jerusalem.

The participants stressed the gravity of recent events in the territories, including the demolition of homes in Bayta and the deportations, saying the government was bowing to the dictates of Jewish settlers in the territories.

The participants also called for an immediate withdrawal from Gaza and the West Bank and for negotiations under the auspices of an international peace conference and with the participation of the PLO, to reach a just peace settlement "before it is too late."

Commentary Speculates on Al-Wazir Murder Motive

TA181120 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 18 Apr 88 p 7

[Commentary by Pinhas 'Inbari: "Removing the Imaginary Hurdle"]

[Text] No one has claimed responsibility for the assassination of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], who headed the PLO's military branch. The main "suspect," however, is Israel. On top of the natural inclination to "suspect" Israel, its culpability is aggravated by the fact that it has made no special effort to deny the suspicions.

Without pointing an accusing finger at Israel as the executor of the operation in Tunis, which is the assumption of analysts and commentators both in Israel and around the world, the question is: What could have prompted Israel to kill Abu Jihad? And why precisely now? First of all, this could be the natural evolution of the "war against the PLO," first launched in the early 1980's by then Defense Minister Ari'el Sharon. It subsequently developed into the war in Lebanon, but did not reach its end when the defense portfolio was turned over to a Labor Party minister. It continues in full force in the territories these very days.

Abu Jihad assumed responsibility for many terrorist acts that shocked Israel. The combination of the escalation of the "war against the PLO" and the continuation of terrorist acts from the Abu Jihad school as manifest in the attack in Dimona on a bus full of mothers could have led to the decision to bring his life to an end.

Yet things are far more involved and complex than this. No one would deny that Israel is deeply concerned these days with the uprising in the territories and its devastating effects. The operation in Tunis must undoubtedly be linked to the uprising in the territories—if, that is, Israel indeed did it.

The reports that Abu Jihad played a substantial role in the uprising are unfounded. He did not initiate it. Furthermore, he was just as surprised by its eruption as the next person. Moreover, when it did break out, he encountered serious difficulties in taming it and harnessing it to suit his purpose. Therefore, the direct link between Abu Jihad and the uprising could not have been Israel's motive for wanting to eliminate him. It must have resulted from other considerations.

The uprising in the territories dragged Israel into a showdown with the Palestinians on an uncomfortable battlefield. The IDF is not a police force, and it has difficulties running after women and children. World sympathies go to the unarmed civilians engaged in the uprising, and quelling the disturbances has even led to some serious squabbling in Israel itself.

Under these circumstances, Israel would have preferred to engage in a war against the Palestinians in another arena, namely the military battlefront. It would have been best for Israel had the PLO decided to go back to terrorism, thereby diverting the fight against Israel from the stone to the Kalashnikov. If the PLO had taken that course of action, Israel would have found the proper way to fight it, would have regained the support of public opinion by being portrayed as the standard bearer of the war against terrorism, and would have made it possible for the entire Israeli population to rally around one cause again. Although it is possible to reach a consensus in Israel on war against terrorism, there is no unanimity of views on the suppression of women and children.

If Israel is really behind the assassination of Abu Jihad—again, as maintained by various observers—then this could be perceived as an attempt by Israel to drag the PLO back to terrorism so as to transfer the major front from the uprising in the territories to the armed PLO "outside." But why now? Israel has been following with concern the development of contacts between the PLO and the United States on the one hand, and the Soviet attempts to persuade the PLO to recognize Israel to clear the way for its participation in the political process on the other.

Now, on the eve of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's impending visit to the Middle East, he will be unable to continue a campaign of persuasion. He will only be able to try to persuade the PLO to show some restraint and control the temptation to engage in another bloody episode that would divest it of the achievements scored by the revolt in the territories. In this context, it should be recalled that after the attack on the three PLO leaders in Limassol, the Soviet Union exerted tremendous efforts to talk the PLO out of avenging their deaths.

If that is the case—and let us hope it is not—then Abu Jihad's demise could bring in its wake the opening of new paths in the political process, provided the Palestinians are provoked no further. Just before his death, Abu Jihad faced an impossible and unnatural situation. He was expelled from Amman 3 years ago, and his attempts to return to the Jordanian capital placed more obstacles in the course of the political process.

We would be mistaken in our facts if we claimed that relations between 'Arafat and Abu Jihad were harmonious in every way. That discord included the administration of affairs in the territories as well. Abu Jihad's position in this area was unique since he controlled the military and civilian functions. As a result, his status was higher than 'Arafat's.

As long as Abu Jihad helped 'Arafat develop the dialogue with Jordan toward obtaining the Husayn-'Arafat accord, no one paid much attention to his special status in the West Bank. He was fiercely loyal to the PLO chief and they worked in tandem. But after his expulsion from Amman, he took a negative view of the progress made in the political sphere because he was left out of it. This was supremely manifest approximately 2 years ago when Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid visited Israel and contacts were held on a visit to Egypt of a Palestinian delegation from the territories. 'Arafat gave his blessing to this, but Abu Jihad opposed the move. Abu Jihad's position cast serious doubts on the actual visit, but 'Arafat ultimately had the upper hand.

Paradoxically the uprising in the territories did not help improve the 'Arafat-Abu Jihad relationship by much. 'Arafat could justifiably have asked why, despite his special status in the territories, Abu Jihad failed to predict the outbreak of the uprising. 'Arafat could also have rightfully suspected that Abu Jihad was in the know but decided not to report to him. As will be recalled, on the eve of the Arab summit meeting in Amman, the PLO urged the inhabitants of the territories to stage an uprising so that 'Arafat could appear before the leaders of the Arab countries flaunting a show of solidarity from the West Bank. Yet the West Bank remained unaffected by the exhortation and 'Arafat had no grounds to question Abu Jihad.

Two months ago 'Arafat declared that he maintains direct contact with the leaders of the uprising in the territories. Israel viewed this as pure, unadulterated bragging, but to Palestinian ears it sounded like an expression of no confidence in Abu Jihad, who was supposed to maintain that kind of contact regularly.

Still, one should not overrate these differences of opinion. Although they had many a showdown, the top echelon of Fatah leaders never suffered a full-scale explosion. Abu Jihad maintained the ties that were important for the PLO and the political process as a whole, although due to his expulsion from Jordan these assets soured to the point of becoming a liability.

By assets I mean his special connections with Islamic fundamentalist circles, particularly in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon. If it were not for his expulsion from Amman, Abu Jihad could have lured important groups from these circles into the political process. This would have been no mean feat, but a man of Abu Jihad's stature could have brought it off. Moreover, he was the **only** [last word in boldface as published] one who could do it. But since he was declared a persona non grata in Jordan he took up quarters in Tripoli, Libya, thereby breaking away from Fatah's general line of following Iraq, Jordan, and Egypt, rather than Libya and Iran. (His relations with Syria were problematic).

Egypt's fear of the negative influence of Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip on fundamentalist groups in Cairo has been discussed before. Abu Jihad's men in Egypt were under constant surveillance and some of them were apprehended after being found guilty of subversive activity. One of his top men, Muhammad Dahlan, who had earlier been deported from Gaza by the Israeli authorities, was again expelled from Cairo. When President Mubarak announced his decision to close the PLO offices in Cairo about a year ago, he mentioned Abu Jihad in that context.

Abu Jihad's rejectionist stand leads many to believe that his disappearance from the stage will help the political process. But this is not true. Abu Jihad was a strong man with real assets in the form of ties with religious circles, for example, which could have benefitted 'Arafat in the later stages of the political process.

Indeed, he was a bitter and frustrated man who stirred up a lot of trouble, but the right way to deal with him would have been to win his heart over by bringing him back to Amman, his natural milieu. After all, he only came to Amman after giving 'Arafat the necessary backing on the political path, which bred the agreement with Husayn. Let us hope that after the shock and pain die out, there will be enough men in the PLO who will be able to control themselves and make progress on the political path.

Al-Wazir's Murder Proves 'Fear of Palestinians'

TA191500 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 17 Apr 88 p 1

[Editorial: "Who Dares To Liquidate the Soil of the Palestinian Homeland?"]

[Text] The crime perpetrated early yesterday morning in the Sidi Bu Sa'id district of the Tunisian capital which led to the death of Khalil al-Wazir depicts an ugly facade of rancor and hatred. Since a crime remains a crime, those who engineered and carried it out will be cursed forever by the innocent blood that was shed and by the pride of the Palestinian people with whom Abu Jihad was affiliated.

In addressing the crime, the question posed is not who stands behind it, but what did the perpetrators of the crime intend to achieve?

This is the most important question, because Abu Jihad was the symbol of a people's aspirations. If the killers of Khalil al-Wazir were planning on creating confusion in the ranks of our people, they are absolutely mistaken—the man has joined the caravan of Palestinians who have fallen in defense of the honor and rights of their people. And if the killers of Khalil al-Wazir imagined that his death would stop the national Palestinian impulses, then they are ignorant of the history of these people who have become a symbol of steadfastness and sacrifice.

What do they intend to achieve by riddling Khalil al-Wazir's body with bullets? To intimidate and terrorize Palestinians?

The answer to these questions has already been given. The Palestinians have passed the stage of fear. They have instilled fear in the hearts of others. The murder of Khalil al-Wazir at his home in Tunis while with his family affirms that it is the criminals who are afraid. Their fear of the Palestinian Khalil al-Wazir is what brought them to Tunisia.

Hence the killing of Khalil al-Wazir is proof that fear of the Palestinians has become a nightmare that is chasing others. Thus the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir becomes a new tune in the symphony of Palestinian awe.

We do not shed tears for Abu Jihad because his death is a new addition to the horizon of a Palestinian future.

One should not mourn the fall of leaves from the homeland's tree because the Palestinian homeland extends beyond any boundaries, it is inside Palestinian soil. And who dares to claim that he can liquidate this soil?

Shamir Comments on Demjanjuk Conviction

TA191222 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has said that every Jew feels a certain satisfaction over the conviction of Ivan Demjanjuk in Jerusalem yesterday. We know, the prime minister said, that the independent State of Israel can judge criminals such as Demjanjuk, and we get a lot of satisfaction out of this.

Rabin Sees Shultz Initiative 'Fading Away'

TA200836 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 20 April 88 p 2

[Report by political correspondent Michal Yudelman]

[Excerpt] The Shultz initiative seems to be fading away at this stage, Defence Minister Yitzhaq Rabin told 100 visiting German journalists yesterday.

Rabin said he was generally in favour of the Shultz initiative and would not object to an international conference, if he could be assured that it would lead to direct peace negotiations. He was speaking at Tel Aviv Press Club.

Asked about reports that a number of 12- to 14-year-old children from the territories, had been imprisoned by the military authorities, Rabin said that in general, the authorities try to avoid imprisoning children.

He noted however that on many occasions children aged 6 to 12 were encouraged by their parents to participate in the stone and fire-bomb throwing, and the Defence Ministry was considering fining such parents. [passage omitted]

Peres Rejects Notion of Palestinian State

TA190827 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 19 Apr 88 p 4

[Report by Sheli Yehimovich]

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres says that the PLO wants a Palestinian state with a Palestinian army armed with Soviet weapons at Jerusalem's gates, and no Jew will agree to this.

"I will certainly not agree to this. What am I, crazy?" Peres said, adding that the Palestinians have rights, but they will receive them in the framework of demilitarized areas in which there will be no army.

Peres answered questions posed by Beersheba's Ben-Gurion University students. He doubts whether it is possible to negotiate with the PLO because the organization is divided, and until 'Arafat can prove that the PLO can make decisions, there is no chance of him convincing us that he can make decisions in the name of the PLO.

Peres also called for demilitarizing the Gaza Strip and for giving its inhabitants self-rule. "The Gaza Strip is the most densely populated area in the world, more than Hong Kong. Tell me, what are we doing there? When the Likud says that the Gaza Strip is an integral part of Israel, what does it mean? The place is so crowded that one cannot even see the ground there. There must be room for logic, not only emotions," Peres remarked. Husayn is willing to negotiate over the future of Gaza, whereas Egypt does not want it under any circumstances.

Peres also said that if he were prime minister he would have put the health system issue at the top of his agenda, after the peace process. He called on the public to support a party which offers a solution, not a party that uses sharp language.

Rabin on Detention Policy, Palestinian State

TA191036 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 19 Apr 88 p 5

[Report by Shmu'el Tal]

[Excerpt] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin yesterday said that so far 5,000 residents of the territories have been detained and more than 1,400 are under administrative detention. He emphasized that "detentions or deportations are not a solution." Rabin was addressing the Labor Party members of the Agricultural Center.

Rabin said that "several party members are creating an image that does not represent the real positions of the Labor Party. People see me as a hawk, whereas in the past people thought I was a dove. My positions and opinions, however, have not changed. I still support a united Jerusalem—this is not a security issue but rather a matter of principle. Our security border should be the Jordan River, the Jordan Valley, and the Judaea and Samaria mountains."

Minister Rabin said we cannot accept a Palestinian state, because it may turn into an explosive that will torpedo any future arrangement. Rabin said that "there is no leadership in the territories today that can say 'we are masters of our fate.' It is no coincidence that the PLO has not permitted any of the Palestinian leaders in the territories to meet with Shultz. They did this to prevent any competition to the PLO in representing the Palestinians in the territories." [passage omitted]

Rabin Concerned About Unbalanced Media Criticism

TA191750 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Defense Minister Rabin today expressed concern about the use of missiles and chemical weapons in the Gulf war. He was speaking at a reception in Tel Aviv given by the Israel Press Club to visiting members of the Frankfurt Press Club.

[Begin Rabin recording] As an Israeli, I am worried. We see that this war in a way gave legitimization to the use of ground-to-ground missiles against centers of population, gave certain legitimization to the use of quite sophisticated types of chemical gas which no doubt should serve as a warning, a signal to us. For example, I didn't see in the international media the kind of reaction for the use of very sophisticated gas by the Iraqis, in which about 5,000 Kurds got killed; vis-a-vis the kind of reaction to the use of sticks by Israel, in which might be 2 Palestinians in the last 4 months got killed. [end recording]

Shamir Not To Join Coalition With Labor Again

TA181330 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 18 Apr 88 p A2

[Report by Menahem Rahat]

[Text] Prime Minister Yithzaq Shamir has changed his views about the possibility that he might initiate another national unity government if the Likud wins the next elections. He said that in view of his experience he does not plan to offer his partners in the government a repeat of this situation after the elections.

Shamir claimed that his partner in the national unity government, the Labor Party, did not meet its commitments under the agreement and that it operated independently, especially in the political arena. "I am still in favor of a national unity government but not with that partner. It is not loyal to the partnership, and to the government and its basic guidelines, and I will not join with it."

Shamir added: "I am not in a hurry to repeat that experience. My senior partner only spoke about unity but did not behave accordingly. The experience does not encourage me to repeat it. It will be much better if we can set up a national unity government without some of the people who damaged the unity and the image of the government."

Shamir avoided naming Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, and his close aides also refused to refer to anybody specific in the Labor Party, but pointed out: "He is not referring to Yitzhaq Rabin."

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' office said in reply to a question that the Labor Party would support a broad-based government if it would advance the country's interests, first and foremost security issues and the peace process.

'Surprise' in NRP Election Upset; Peres Comments

TA181146 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English
1000 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Now for the surprise outcome in the National Religious Party [NRP] elections for a new Knesset list. Placed unexpectedly at the top of the list last night was Professor Avner Sciaki, who defeated Religious Affairs Minister Zvulun Hammer. Three of the first five places went to the supporters of the more hawkish policy line of the party. Sciaki himself said last night that the vote meant that the party would be speaking with a clearer line and not, in his words, hesitate and stammer.

[Begin recording] [Sciaki] If this party is more reliable, if there is more credibility of its leaders, she might again become one of the biggest parties with seven, eight to nine members of Knesset. [end recording]

Vice Premier Shim'on Peres has voiced disappointment with the turn to the right in the NRP. Reporter Jack Katzenell asked him if it is now possible for Labor to form a coalition with the NRP after the elections.

[Begin recording] [Peres] I don't know if we can restore a pact with the party and not with the name of the party. I think that what is needed, not just for the Labor Party, but also for the religious, is a middle-road religious party which is responsible and balanced. I think that with the decision yesterday I wonder if such a party as the present NRP is an entirely different organization, it is an entirely different concept. I think we will have to explain to the public what is really the difference between them and the Likud, Gush Emunim and Tehiya.

[Katzenell] What effect does this turn in the NRP have on the overall political map on this crucial balance between what is called the national camp on the one side and Labor and the parties to the left of Labor?

[Peres] I don't think it changes the situation. It clarifies it. I mean parties that are basically on the right side are now appearing in the right light. That is all.

[Katzenell] Is this not a setback for Labor and its plans to establish a coalition after the elections without the Likud?

[Peres] I don't think so. I think it is too early to judge. [end recording]

Arens, Gur Sworn in as Cabinet Ministers

TA181020 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1000 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Excerpt] By a majority of coalition votes the Knesset approved the appointment of Knesset Members Moshe Arens and Mordekhay Gur as cabinet ministers. The two were sworn in and began their terms as ministers. [passage omitted]

PLO Attempts To 'Intimidate' Arab Workers Fails

TA180715 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 18 Apr 88 p 10

[Report by Jeff Black]

[Text] The PLO's attempts to intimidate West Bank and Gaza Strip workers against working in Israel have failed, Labour Minister Moshe Qatzav told Francis Blanchard, director-general of the International Labour Organization yesterday.

Qatzav said that between December and February, there had been a 10 percent increase in their number of Palestinians from the territories working legally in Israel compared with the same period a year ago.

Blanchard, who has been ILO director-general since 1974, arrived yesterday for his first visit to Israel, at Qatzav's invitation. The main purpose of his two-day visit is to collect information on the employment situation of the territories' residents. Blanchard is also slated to meet Prime Minister Shamir and Foreign Minister Peres.

Qatzav said that since the beginning of the riots 40 buses used to transport workers had been set on fire as have five employment offices. But the minister stressed that the IDF will do all it can to allow West Bank and Gaza Strip residents the chance to continue working in Israel.

Ministry officials said yesterday around 60,000 Arab workers from the territories worked in Israel in 1987 with the necessary employment service authorization. Another 50,000 are estimated to work in Israel illegally.

Qatzav, in his meeting with Blanchard, pointed out that the 3 percent unemployment rate in the territories was much lower than the two-digit rate in Jordan and Syria, two previous stops on the ILO head's Middle East tour.

The minister asked Blanchard to ensure that no political bias entered this year's ILO report on the employment situation in the territories as Israel has said has happened in past years. Qatzav promised that Israel would allow West Bank and Gaza Strip workers to engage in trade union activity.

AL-NAHAR: Deportation Policy 'Death Sentence'

TA151619 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic
14 Apr 88 p 1

[Editorial: "Deportation Is The Implementation of the 'Transfer' Policy"]

[Text] The deportation decisions carried out by the Israeli authorities against some of our compatriots prove again that Israeli policy toward the Palestinian people in the occupied areas is still based on not paying any heed to the feelings of Palestinians.

Israel claims that it is a democratic state and that its laws do not convict someone to death. Deportation, however, is a mine that demolishes democracy and is a death sentence.

The law that takes a Palestinian away from his land and from members of his family is a despotic law which is not based on any moral or human basis. Even the articles of the British emergency law according to which deportation is being carried out, say that the deportee must be sent to a territory that is under British sovereignty and for a limited period. Thus the Israelis are violating even the despotic British laws.

The Israeli authorities have alleged that those being deported are "instigators," but it has been proved that this claim is not based on any political reality. The Israelis have deported thousands of Palestinians. Has the situation calmed down?

The policy of deportation makes the Palestinians more bitter and undermines any chance of achieving peace. Deportation, above all else, is a reminder to the Palestinians of the intentions of some Israelis to implement the "transfer" policy.

Editorial Urges PLO To Coordinate With Jordan

TA151413 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic
13 Apr 88 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "We and Indications of International Movement"]

[Text] There is increasing speculation that U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz will pay a third visit to the region. Moreover, it is likely that Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze will also visit the region.

It seems that a "conformity" in the U.S. and Soviet viewpoints regarding the conflict in the region has become imminent. We, here in the occupied territories, are pleased not only with U.S.-Soviet rapprochement, but because our problem has gained the concern of the superpowers.

Apparently the international and regional situation has become so ripe that it has become possible to launch a peace process in the Middle East. Undoubtedly the uprising in the occupied territories was the most important factor in stimulating the problem so that now it is at the top of international priorities.

Although the U.S. Administration is in the last months of its term, evidence indicates that it is serious about convening an international conference with the participation of the Soviet Union. In light of this, the foreign ministers of the two countries, Shultz and Shevardnadze, are required to issue a joint U.S.-Soviet statement comprising "agreement" on the peace principles between the Arabs and Israel, similar to the Soviet-U.S. statement issued several years ago between the foreign ministers of the two countries, Vance and Gromyko.

This is on the international level. On the Arab-Israeli level, which is more important, it is necessary that the Palestinian and Israeli arena be prepared to accept a comprehensive peace plan so that negotiations can begin within the framework of the international conference. In the Israeli arena, Israel must accept the principle of exchanging "land for peace" and Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab lands.

On the Palestinian level, the opportunity is available for the PLO, the Palestinian people's legitimate representative, to join the international conference. The PLO is required, as Gorbachev noted, to accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, renew coordination with Jordan, and reach a unified Arab position that would grant Syria its pioneering role and give the international conference a pan-Arab depth in the negotiations. By this step we would place before Israel and the entire world their responsibilities for reaching a genuine and just peace in the region.

Commentary Finds Pattern in Husayn's Behavior

TA151122 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
15 Apr 88 p B10

[Commentary by Moshe Zaq: "Agreements With Husayn"]

[Text] On 8 April 1970, the IDF pulled back from Al-Safi on the southeastern tip of the Dead Sea to allow the Jordanian Army to take control of the region, which was teeming with terrorists. The agreement in principle on turning this area, which stretches over tens of square km, over to Jordan was reached in a meeting between King

Husayn and Moshe Dayan. The specifics regarding the implementation of this decision were worked out in a meeting between the chiefs of staff of the IDF and the Jordanian Army.

The IDF was to leave the area at 0600, and the Jordanian Army was scheduled to enter it at 0700. The unit, which was deployed in a building in the middle of the tomato fields around the village, was ordered to stick to this timetable. The unit commander, however, decided for some reason to depart 60 minutes ahead of schedule. He therefore ordered his men to abandon the structure at 0500 rather than 0600, as per the original schedule. A few minutes after the unit's departure, an artillery barrage struck the building, razing it to the ground.

Even though the agreement was worked out to the finest detail, the Jordanians felt compelled to act out this charade. The king avoided presenting the IDF withdrawal as the outcome of an Israeli-Jordanian agreement. Instead, he portrayed it as a campaign to expel the "Israeli infiltrators" from Jordanian soil. This is how Amman described the battle conducted by the Jordanian force, under the command of none other than the reigning monarch, to force the IDF back from Jordanian territory. Moshe Dayan preferred not to enter into an argument with the king, although he did point out that the important thing is that the Jordanian Army took up positions in the area instead of the terrorists. Israel nonetheless fully understood why Husayn had to launch the artillery attack on the structure occupied by the Israeli soldiers, who were spared a bitter end merely thanks to their commander's alertness.

The moral in this 18-year-old event can serve as a consolation of sorts to anyone who feels baffled by the public declarations that emanated from Amman this week on the occasion of the 1st anniversary of the Husayn-Peres accord.

The London agreement, which Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i also helped formulate, says that "the Palestinian problem will be discussed at a bilateral meeting between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation." This week, however, the self-same Al-Rifa'i proclaimed that Israel will have to engage in negotiations with the PLO. An official Jordanian spokesman compounded this with the announcement that Jordan will not discuss Judaea and Samaria with Israel at all. It will only discuss the 'Arava region (namely, the Al-Safi area), and the mouth of the Al-Yarmuk River. This conflicts with the Husayn-Peres agreement from last year.

The Jordanian official who mentioned Al-Safi failed to realize that the very fact that he mentioned that place actually provides the explanation for this shift in Jordan's position. The method is simple: first an agreement, then a volley of shells or a barrage of declarations.

Jordan has already reneged on an agreement with Israel under UN auspices once before. Exactly 20 years ago, Cyprus was to have served as the venue for an Israeli-Jordanian and Israeli-Egyptian conference under the chairmanship of Gunnar Jarring. But on 16 April 1968, Jordan withdrew its agreement to the conference.

One can easily detect numerous similarities between the U.S. initiative of 20 years ago and the present-day Shultz initiative. The only difference is the aegis. The Cyprus conference was to have been held under UN auspices, presided over by Jarring, rather than under the supervision of the superpowers.

The Americans promised Husayn at that time that he stands a good chance of retrieving "most of the territories." The king, for his part, made his readiness to dispatch a delegation to the conference conditional upon an open Israeli pledge to accept Resolution 242. Ambassador Barbour hurried to Eshkol's residence, bearing a message from President Johnson pointing out the monarch's dire straits and recommending that Israel never forget that its relations with the United States should take precedence over any change in Dr Jarring's formulation of the purpose of the conference.

Assured by Abba Eban that the Cyprus conference was going to be a latter-day replica of the "Rhodes conference," then Prime Minister Eshkol accepted the text. Still, the Israeli acceptance did not guarantee the holding of the conference. On 16 April, Husayn informed Jarring that he was retracting his former consent and suggested instead that the UN envoy try to conduct mediation talks with the parties at the UN headquarters in New York.

Husayn led the United States by the nose for many months, making it believe that he was just about to obtain a license from the Arab leaders to conduct negotiations with Israel for the purpose of winning back the territories. President Johnson promised to support that "return," though with minor border alterations. Furthermore, he urged Israel to pursue the clandestine negotiations with Husayn until a way could be found to hold open negotiations.

Husayn pleaded with the Arab leaders, but was denied permission. Since then, Husayn and the Americans have been seeking a "cover" to allow him to engage in direct negotiations. Yet no sooner does the decisive milestone enter the field of vision, than it disappears from our eyes. Husayn cannot shake himself free of the pan-Arab straitjacket into which he got himself in June 1967.

Husayn never changed his mind or became inflexible. Husayn remains Husayn. He relishes diplomatic activity, the trips, the game of making declarations everyone is so busy trying to interpret. To make headlines he must surprise, never repeat the same position, squirm, leave something veiled. Most importantly, he must never ever let go of the scepter he has been clutching since the Amman summit which designated his role as spokesman for the united Arab nation. He must very carefully hang on to the halo of the one who can unite all the warring factions in the Islamic world.

Thanks to these two achievements, he is now acceptable in the West and the East alike. The Soviet Union is ready to provide him with weapons, while the United States has been courting him. 'Arafat vies for invitations by Husayn, thereby helping him silence the Palestinians residing in the Kingdom, while Israel promises him the link to Judaea and Samaria—although he is not too eager to regain control over the Palestinians living west of the Jordan River.

He is now leaning more toward his dowager mother Zayn's position, espoused also by his brother Hasan, that the "West Bank" is a liability to his Kingdom, even though he will never say as much out loud. On the contrary, he wants to prove to the Arab world that only he can squeeze a declaration out of the United States and Israel on the return of territories. It was he who managed to break the Israeli opposition to the international conference by reaching a certain agreement about this with the Israeli foreign minister.

Husayn is toying with the hope that by walking the tightrope stetching between Moscow and Washington, and between Peres and 'Arafat, he can also attain another goal. Even if he cannot actually reach a substantial agreement—since he will, as usual, opt not to take any risk vis-a-vis his in-house opponents—then at least he will manipulate Israel into making outright statements about its readiness to make concessions. This will strengthen his standing in the Arab world and could guarantee a more convenient starting point for the next stage of the Israeli-Arab bargaining.

The Jordan River cannot turn back [reference to Psalms 114:5], and neither can Husayn. Although we have tried to change the course of the Jordan River before, we have always encountered difficulties. One cannot expect the Jordanian king to change. We have no choice but to reconcile ourselves to his methods and regard him as part of the arid skyline beyond the river. Just as Israel cannot divorce itself from the Jordan River, so it cannot sever the line of discourse with the Hashemite Kingdom. We are obligated to live with this because we are neighbors, but at the same time we must acknowledge Husayn's shortcomings and refrain from pinning preposterous hopes on him because they will only breed disappointment.

Husayn now wants to show the Arab nations that he can force Israel back to the 1967 border lines. In meetings with Arab statesmen, he never mentions peace with Israel, only an arrangement for a withdrawal. He thus wants to secure their consent for negotiations toward such a settlement under the auspices of the superpowers. He is forced to writhe and wriggle between his commitment to the United States on direct negotiations and his commitment to the Arab summit against direct negotiations for peace. Hence the contradictions in the declarations from Amman.

These contradictions do not surprise those who never entertained any illusions and who realize that Husayn, as is his wont, will stop short one step before the crucial decision, as Al-Sadat so succinctly put it.

Body Found Near Tyre Not Colonel Higgins

NC191514 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1503 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] UNIFIL, having received information indicating that the corpse of kidnapped U.S. Colonel William Richard Higgins was lying in the Al-Qasimiyah River in Tyre, sent a military police team to the area. The team found a body, but it was not Col Higgins. The identity of the deceased has not been determined.

Group Threatens 2 U.S. Hostages Over Hijacking

WA200216 Paris AFP in English 0005 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Beirut, April 20 (AFP)—A group holding two American hostages in Lebanon early Wednesday issued a thinly veiled threat to act against them if Algeria betrayed the hijackers or made a "mistake" in handling the Kuwait Airways 747 grounded in Algiers.

"The response" to "any betrayal or mistake" by the Algerians, warned the Revolutionary Justice Organization (ORJ), "will not be limited to Kuwait or the Algiers Airport."

The threat was contained in an Arabic-language communique accompanied by a recent instant color picture of Joseph Ciccipio, an American University of Beirut employee who was kidnapped in September 1986 in West Beirut.

The group also claimed responsibility for the abduction of Edward Tracy, a book trader, on October 21, 1986.

The communique, sent to the AN-NAHAR newspaper in Beirut, warned Algeria against "the negative effects of any betrayal or mistake in the hijack affair". The threat came several hours after the hijacked Kuwait Airways jumbo jet was plunged into darkness here late Tuesday for what airport officials said were technical problems, correspondents said.

As soon as the lights went out on the plane, one of the hijackers asked through radio control what was going on.

An airport official replied that there were "technical problems" but that all would be back to normal "in five to 10 minutes".

A few hours later, an Algerian negotiator spent 25 minutes on board the plane, which was still in the dark late Tuesday.

The hijack which started over the southern Gulf is now into its third week.

French Hostages Will Be Released Before 23 Apr

NC191757 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Citing sources close to mediators in the issue of the French hostages held in Lebanon, the AKHBAR LUBNAN News Agency reports that two French hostages will be released before 23 April. The agency said that businessmen 'Imran Adham and Mahdi al-Tajir are continuing their efforts in Beirut and that they attach importance in this regard to 23 April.

Islamic Jihad Threatens Peace Plan Supporters

NC191243 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] The Islamic Jihad Organization today sent a threat to all those participating in Middle East peace plans and in the initiatives which it described as defeatist. It also affirmed its support and backing for the Palestinian action in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Jordan's King Husayn, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz are trying to circumvent this action, said the Islamic Jihad Organization's statement. The organization sent the statement to a foreign news agency in Beirut, marking the 5th anniversary of the blowing up of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. We recall that the Islamic Jihad first appeared in March 1983, and claimed responsibility for blowing up the French and U.S. Multinational Forces Headquarters in late October 1983.

Al-Jumayyil Returns From France 19 Apr

NC200622 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] President Shaykh Amin al-Jumayyil has concluded his 6-day visit to the French capital. He left Paris and returned to Beirut last night.

Birri Criticizes U.S. 'Aggression' in Gulf

NC191422 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Amal Movement leader Minister Nabih Birri has denounced the aggression which the United States committed in the Gulf area against the Islamic Republic of Iran. He demanded an immediate U.S. withdrawal from the Gulf waters. He stressed that the people's rights cannot be suppressed by methods adopted from the Middle Ages.

Junblatt Says Al-Jumayyil Obstructing Detente

NC181340 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] PSP leader Walid Junblatt has charged that Amin al-Jumayyil, with the support of Israeli-western alliances, is obstructing all solutions leading to detente in Lebanon. Junblatt warned against serious disturbances in the region, and added: It seems that the U.S. Administration will help Israel's right wing win the coming elections. This, he said, will lead to further Israeli adventures, which will begin first with Lebanon.

Walid Junblatt Interviewed on Reforms, Election

NC161508 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] PSP Leader Walid Junblatt has asserted that the solution currently sought is a sectarian one. He emphasized that the president should be elected by the people, and a democratic, nationalist, and Arab system should be established. He noted that the nationalist movement has always existed and will continue to do so, despite all it has endured. Junblatt declared these positions in an interview published by the periodical MAGAZINE. Here is a report on the interview.

Asked what results could be expected from the U.S.-Syrian talks on Lebanon, Junblatt responded that they will produce a new agreement, which will, of course, be called a nationalist agreement but will in reality be a new sectarian agreement. Asked whether such an agreement would include some reforms to reorganize the country, he replied that these reforms will be very marginal.

He added that, for instance, the solution will give the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies the authority to make consultations when a government is formed. Junblatt said: We believe the Chamber of Deputies must be elected by the people, and the president must also be elected by the people.

When note was made of Junblatt's new ideas proposed to those concerned with Lebanon's future, he responded: No one wants to listen. They are speaking now of a Chamber of Deputies whose membership will be increased to 108, not by election but by filling the vacant seats in the Lebanese way. Thus, everyone will elect their own son or cousin, for example. Asked whether the establishment of cantons would not provide his party and sect with protection, Junblatt answered: Absolutely not. Cantons will not survive. It is impossible.

Asked under what circumstances a strong state would arise, he said: Everything depends on the concept one has of a strong state. When the Americans want a strong state, they want a strong army. As far as I am concerned this is a great danger, because in my view a strong state means proper democracy, a new election law based on proportional representation, and a president who is actually elected by the people. Without an army, he was asked?

He replied: With an army, but with guarantees, because if we give free rein to the army, the parliament and the other institutions will be merely a facade of democracy, while the army will remain as it has always been. We recall here the famous deuxieme bureau in the days of President Shihab and the role this bureau played at a certain stage. If this is going to be the situation, it will be worse than in the past.

Asked whether there were any difference between the U.S. and Syrian method in seeking a solution, Junblatt answered: Apparently the two methods are the same.

Asked if his nomination of Antoine al-Ashqar as presidential candidate showed he was adhering to convention or if he had bypassed convention, Junblatt answered: Al-Ashqar was born a Christian, just as I was born a Druze. He has believed, however, in the principles of the PSP. We have every right to nominate him. Let us be frank. This is our method of escaping to the front so as not to accept the settlements that will proposed to us.

Asked to elaborate, Junblatt said: If everything goes as it should, they will tell us: Listen, gentlemen and political parties: This or that person is the national candidate, and you are invited to support him. For this reason I nominated Al-Ashqar. I insist on implementing the stage-by-stage national program so that when the time of the presidential elections comes, this or that candidate will not be imposed on me. I will be able to say no, because I will have a candidate; that is all. However, I prefer to be in the opposition if I am allowed. Sometimes you are not allowed to be in the opposition.

Asked if he believes there is a possibility of reaching a final solution while we are developing a new settlement, Junblatt said: It is a settlement. But when all values collapse and no political values remain, there will be a complete collapse. The criminals, thugs, and killers will mingle with the honest people, and together they will make the settlement in Lebanon. What can result from such a mixture?

Asked whether it can be said that Arab national feeling is lacking, the PSP leader said: No, this feeling exists. The evidence of this is the presence of the national movement, which is an Arab one. This movement has continued and survived, despite the blows it has received from the Lebanese Army, the Phalangists, Israel, and even Syria when there were differences.

Asked why there should be a Syrian-U.S. agreement at this particular stage, Junblatt said: We do not live in a vacuum. This depends on the general situation in the Middle East. Rapprochement between the two great powers did not exist in the past. The Americans even refused to hear about an international conference; now they are saying there is a convergence of the two great powers' interests, and this affects Lebanon.

Junblatt was asked: You are against sectarianism, but do you not believe its retention will preserve the democracy of minorities? He replied: This course has proven a failure. They want to repeat the experience. Let them do so, and we will have a civil war in 10 or 15 years.

Asked how he perceives the Phalangist Party in the next 10 years, Junblatt said: This depends on the Christians. If they want to follow this extremist trend, regardless of the calamities they would suffer, then the Phalangist Party will remain. But if the Christians decide to pursue the course of democracy, it will then become a peripheral movement.

Asked his view of the Shi'ites' demands, he said: They mean returning to sectarianism. The theory of numerical democracy cannot succeed. Hence, we must break out of this vicious circle and move toward real political democracy, without sectarianism, numbers, or the minorities' complexities.

Regarding his relations with Nabih Birri, Junblatt said: They are neither good nor bad.

Regarding the Soviet Union, its role, and its view of the solution, he said: The Soviet Union is playing a role and will play a very important role in the Middle East region.

Asked about the actions of the General Labor Federation, Junblatt said: I support the federation's actions, because they are necessary. The Federation might not have the courage now to name or condemn the official or officials who are responsible for the economic crisis. As to those he believes responsible, he said: The Lebanese state and Amin al-Jumayyil, who have squandered billions of pounds on the Lebanese Army and are continuing with this policy.

Regarding the return of Christians to the mountain, Junblatt said: The return of Christians to the mountain is not the issue. There is the issue of the evacuees in general. Why this insistence on only this aspect of the issue, which should be resolved as a whole? Partial solutions to the issue will not last.

USSR Envoy on Shevardnadze Visit, Conference

NC151112 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] The secretary general of the Foreign Ministry met today with Soviet Ambassador Vasiliy Kolotusha. They discussed local and regional developments, and after the meeting Kolotusha said: Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze's proposal to convene an international conference for peace is being considered in international circles. I hope that this idea will become a reality and that matters will move in this direction.

Asked whether Shultz's efforts will help to convene the conference and are in harmony with Shevardnadze's proposal, he stated: We hope that the current efforts will converge to produce the same result, which is an international conference and serious efforts to find a solution to the Middle East crisis. Answering another question, he said: It is difficult at this point to reach agreement on a suitable formula for convening this conference, but we hope that there will be some progress in this regard.

Kolotusha said that he expects Shevardnadze to make a tour of some Arab states, but he said that he does not know the dates. He did not exclude the possibility that the Soviet minister will visit Syria and Jordan.

Asked whether the delay in convening an international conference will affect the solution of the Lebanese crisis, he replied: I do not think so, because there are things which concern the internal Lebanese situation. The fact that the conference has not been convened should not prevent some relaxation in the Lebanese situation. Asked whether there is any link between an international conference and the Lebanese crisis, he said: There are internal Lebanese matters and there are external matters that have an effect on the Lebanese situation.

Friendship Delegation Departs for Moscow 20 Apr

NC201430 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] A delegation from the Lebanese-Soviet Friendship Society left Beirut for Moscow this afternoon. During its week-long stay in the Soviet Union, which is taking place in response to an official invitation, the delegation will meet with several Soviet officials.

The members of the delegation are: Lawyer 'Umar Karami, Deputy Edmond Rizq, former Ministers Marwan Hamadah and Elias Saba, Dr Muhammad 'Ali Musa, Usamah Sa'd, 'Abd al-Amir 'Abbas, Dawud Baz, Dr Hasan 'Awadah, and Yusuf Murtada.

Ambassador 'Asim Jabir from the Foreign Ministry and Soviet Ambassador Vasiliy Kolotusha were at the airport to see the delegation off.

Palestinian Deportees Arrive From Israel 19 Apr

NC191834 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Four days after the criminal assassination of Palestinian leader Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], terrorism again manifested itself by the deportation of eight Palestinians from their homeland. They arrived in Marj al-Zuhur in Western al-Biqa' this afternoon after an Israeli helicopter transported them from inside their occupied homeland. A PSP delegation received them and took them to Ksarah.

The deportees are Najih Jamil Sa'adah Duwaydat, Ahmad Fawzi Khalid al-Dik, Ghassan 'Ali 'Izzat al-Masri, Ibrahim Muhammad Khudr 'Ali, 'Umar Muhammad Sa'id Dawud, Sari Hillayil Tahir Hamayil, Mustafa Muhammad 'Abid Hamayil, and 'Imad 'Abd Ibrahim al-Jaghub. [passage omitted]

UN Envoy Protests Israeli Treatment of Detainees

NC160739 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Ambassador Rashid Fakhuri, Lebanon's permanent delegate to the United Nations, has informed Acting Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss that, acting upon instructions, he has submitted a letter of protest from the Lebanese Foreign Ministry to the UN Secretariat General. The letter deals with the attitude of the Israeli occupation authorities and their agents toward the Lebanese citizens detained in the Al-Khiyam and Marj 'Uyun camps.

The letter says: The Israeli occupation authorities are preventing the representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] from entering the Al-Khiyam and Marj 'Uyun camps to inspect the condition of the Lebanese citizens detained there. These authorities physically liquidate some citizens, torture others, and prevent their relatives from visiting them. It is therefore requested that a strongly worded protest be lodged with the UN Secretariat General on the basis that these acts constitute a flagrant violation of the Geneva agreements. Furthermore, we have asked our mission in Geneva to contact the ICRC and convey this information, as well as to request its representatives to intercede with the Israeli authorities with a view to stopping all of these acts.

The letter sent to the Lebanese mission in Geneva says: We have learned that the Israeli occupation authorities are preventing the representatives of the ICRC in Lebanon from entering the Al-Khiyam and Marj 'Uyun camps to inspect the conditions of the detainees there. The authorities physically liquidate some of the detainees, torture others, and prevent their relatives from visiting them. In view of the fact that these acts constitute a flagrant violation of the Geneva convention, it is requested that the ICRC be contacted with view to persuading Israel to permit the Red Cross representatives in Lebanon to visit the detainees and prepare reports on their conditions, and also to persuading Israel to stop these measures and see to the immediate release of the detainees.

Resistance Attacks Israeli, Lahd Forces in South

NC200650 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] In the resisting South, a ferocious confrontation between resistance fighters and Israeli occupation forces in Qabrikha yesterday resulted in the martyrdom of two fighters. In another development, resistance fighters carried out two operations against the occupation forces in Al-Surayri and Taw'amat Niha. The Israeli forces stormed Rumaysh and Rum and kidnapped eight citizens from Rum.

According to a statement issued by the Amal Movement, at 2115 yesterday Lebanese resistance groups attacked the Haddathah position. Using RPG's and machineguns, they destroyed bunkers at the position as well as an M-48 tank belonging to agent Lahd's militia. Other groups used 82-mm mortars to bombard a post held by occupation forces in Rshaf.

Anti-Birri Group Responsible

NC200907 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0745 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] In a move seen as a challenge to Minister Nabih Birri's leadership of the Amal Movement, the faithful resistance group of Amal, which is opposed to Birri and sympathetic to Hizballah, has claimed responsibility for confronting Israeli and South Lebanese Army forces in the town of Qabrikha in the South. The group added that two of its members were killed in the operation.

It is noteworthy that the Amal Movement under Birri's leadership had announced that the staging of anti-Israeli military operations would be confined to an operations room under its command. This move followed the recent Amal-Hizballah clashes in the South. The Amal Movement announced earlier that it had confiscated Hizballah's arms and that some Hizballah groups had joined the movement.

Israelis Move Toward Al-Biqa'

NC200735 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0726 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] We have just been informed that Lebanese Army positions in Mashghrah, Taw'amat Niha, Maydun, and 'Ayn al-Tinah are currently coming under intensive heavy shellfire from Israeli long-range artillery. Meanwhile, according to our information, the Israelis are attempting to advance toward Western al-Biqa'. We will keep you informed of any further details.

Violent Clashes Reported

NC200839 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] According to reports received from Western al-Biqa', a confrontation is now taking place between resistance fighters and Israeli enemy forces in the Maydun and 'Ayn al-Tinah areas. The Israeli enemy forces have been shelling the two towns with artillery since 0500 today. The shelling is reaching the outskirts of Mashgharah.

A security source in the Amal Movement has noted that this sudden Israeli shelling is in retaliation for an operation which the resistance groups-Amal Movement carried out. The source said that the Israelis are attempting to advance on the 'Ayn al-Tinha combat line and that violent clashes are now raging between the advancing forces and the Amal gunmen.

'Limited' Israeli Advance

NC200956 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
0915 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Israeli forces and South Lebanese Army [SLA] personnel made a limited attempt to advance outside the security belt this morning. They clashed with a fundamentalist group near Birkat Jabbur in Western al-Biqa', where the two sides traded rocket and artillery fire. The Lebanese Army's 1st Brigade intervened, and bombarded the SLA positions in Al-Dallafah and on the outskirts of Lafr Hunah. SLA personnel reportedly monitored unusual movements near Birkat Jabbur by fundamentalist gunmen, who were preparing to carry out an operation against SLA troops to pound Mashgharah and 'Ayn al-Tinah with 155-mm mortar fire preparatory to their operation outside the security belt.

Tension in the area subsided at around 0900 today. According to preliminary reports, the clashes left one fundamentalist dead and three SLA troops wounded.

Patrol Ambushed; 5 Killed

NC201226 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic
1130 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] A Lebanese resistance group ambushed a patrol of enemy forces and their agents on Al-Qatran Road in Western al-Biqa' this morning. The resistance fighters attacked the patrol with rockets and machinegun fire, killing five enemy personnel. Soon afterward, the enemy forces and their agents, supported by helicopters, raked the area with various types of heavy- and medium-caliber weapons.

Al-Jumayyil Approves Government Appointments

NC141236 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1115 GMT 14 Apr 88

President Amin al-Jumayyil today signed decrees 4764, 4765, and 4766, approving foreign service appointments. According to the first decree, Lebanon's Ambassador in Paris Amir Faruq Abu al-Lama' is to be transferred to the Foreign Ministry. Under the second decree, Ambassador Fu'ad al-Turk, secretary general of the Foreign Ministry, will be appointed to the Lebanese Embassy in Paris as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the French Government. The third decree appoints Amir Faruq Abu al-Lama' to the post of Foreign Ministry secretary general, replacing Ambassador al-Turk. President al-Jumayyil also signed decree 4767, appointing Brigadier Muhammad Qubrusli, commander of the Beirut Police Force, acting director general of internal security forces.

Jannati, Iranian Delegation Arrive in Beirut

NC200800 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic
0530 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] In a statement released last night, the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran said that an Iranian delegation led by Ahmad Jannati, member of the Council of Guardians and head of the Islamic Propaganda Organization, has arrived in Beirut. The delegation's mission is to strengthen the ties of fraternity, unity, and amity among the armed groups in Lebanon.

Khalil al-Wazir's Body Arrives From Tunis

JN191636 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Damascus—The body of martyr Khalil al-Wazir, also know as Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, who was assassinated by the Israeli intelligence, Mosad, in Tunis last Saturday arrived in Damascus at 1500 today. Arriving on board the same plane were Ahmed Karoui, director of the Destourian Democratic Rally; and Habib 'Ammar, Tunisian minister of interior, who are accompanying the body of martyr Abu Jihad and representing Tunisia in the funeral that will take place tomorrow, Wednesday. The body will be buried in the martyr's cemetery in the Al-Yarmuk camp.

The body was also accompanied by Al-Wazir's wife and her five children; some of his relatives; Abu 'Ali Mustafa [Mustafa al-Zibri], PLO Executive Committee member and assistant secretary general of the PFLP; Sulayman al-Najjab, PLO Executive Committee member and member of the Political Bureau of the Palestinian Communist Party; Hani al-Hasan, Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid, and Rafiq al-Natshah, members of the Fatah Central Committee; Tal'at Ya'qub, secretary general of the Palestinian Liberation Front; Salih Ra'fat, member of the DFLP Political Bureau; and Abu Dawud, member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council.

The martyr's body was received by Comrade Sa'id Hammadi, member of the Ba'th Party Regional Command; Dr Muhammad Harba, Syrian minister of interior; Khalid al-Fahum, [former] speaker of the PNC; Comrade 'Isam al-Qadi, secretary general of the Al-Sa'iqah Forces; Dr George Habash, secretary general of the PFLP; 'Abd al-Muhsin Abu Mayzar, Talal Naji, Abu Mahir al-Yamani [Ahmad Yamani], Muhammad Zuhid al-Nashahshibi, and Muhammad Khalifah, members of the PLO Executive Committee; and Salim al-Za'nun, also known as Abu al-Adib, deputy speaker of the PNC.

Also receiving the body were a number of Palestinian Ba'th Party Regional Command members; Arabi 'Awwad, secretary general of the revolutionary Palestinian Communist Party; Khalid 'Abd al-Majid, assistant secretary of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front; Mahmud al-Khalidi, PLO representative in Damascus; Zuhayr 'Aqil, director of the Arab boycott of Israel office in Damascus; and a number of Arab and foreign ambassadors. Also present were a number of PNC members, representatives of some Palestinian revolution factions and the progressive Arab parties and forces in Damascus, representatives of the Palestinian popular organizations, the martyr's mother and relatives in Damascus, and a large crowd of citizens.

Martyr Abu Jihad's body, which was wrapped in the Palestinian flag, was taken to the Al-Muwasat Hospital in Damascus in an official procession.

Damascus Funeral Held

JN201226 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] The funeral of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] was held in Damascus this afternoon. The funeral procession began at noon today from the Al-Muwasah Hospital in Damascus. The procession ended at the Al-Yarmuk refugee camp where a memorial ceremony was held before the Palestinian leader was buried in the martyr's cemetry.

A large crowd attended the funeral which was led by senior Syrian and Arab officials and Palestinian leaders in Damascus as well as by the family of the deceased.

Contrary to all expectations and reports broadcast last night and this morning, PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat did not come to Damascus. At present he is in Libya for talks with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi in his first visit to Tripoli since 1982. However, some sources close to 'Arafat today did not rule out the possibility that the PLO leader will visit Damascus in the near future.

'Arafat, Al-Qadhdhafi Arrive

JN201215 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1207 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] The Syrian News Agency has said that Brother Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Comittee, and Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the great Al-Fatih revolution, arrived in Damascus this morning to participate in the funeral of martyr Brother Khalil al-Wazir, who was assassinated by the Zionist terrorist organs in Tunis on Saturday. A responsible Palestinian source said that Brother Yasir 'Arafat and the Libyan leader left Tripoli for Damascus this morning.

Foreign Minister on Shultz Mission, Other Issues

JN151910 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1735 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Interview with Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' by Louis Faris and Antoine Abu Samrah in Damascus; live or recorded]

[Text] [Faris] Your Excellency Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar': Recently, you chaired the Arab League Council's ministerial meeting in Tunis. What are the most important results of the meeting? What can be expected from the forthcoming Arab summit in Algiers?

[Al-Shar'] First of all I want to say that whatever support the Arab states extend to the uprising in the occupied Arab territory, such support is less than it should be, because the uprising has brought about a great qualitative transformation in the Arab and international arenas, which must be taken into consideration in the forthcoming stage.

The latest Arab League Council meeting in Tunis has underlined the importance of extending support to the uprising. As the foreign ministers are not in a position to make a decision, the proposed Arab summit will place upon the Arab states the direct responsibility of supporting the uprising with all their power.

[Faris] How, in your view?

[Al-Shar'] As you know, Algeria called for convening such an emergency summit. The new development that occurred in Tunis recently is that Algeria declared its desire to host the summit. Only the date remains to be fixed. The Arab League Council decided the date should be in the 1st week of June 1988.

[Abu Samrah] Mr Minister, you say an emergency summit. However, the emergency summit is being held after 1 and 1/2 months. Why? Are there reasons? Are there reservations on the part of some Arab states that have delayed the summit?

[Al-Shar'] That is in fact an important observation, and reflects an unsatisfactory paradox that we reflect in some Arab meetings. Supporting the uprising and convening the summit should have been early and should have accompanied the march of the uprising in the occupied Arab territory. However that is what happened. Some fraternal Arab states took the view that it is difficult to convene a summit during the month of Ramadan. Other states had in the past hesitated in expressing their desire to convene the summit. However, what is important is the result. The result now is there is an Arab concensus that appeared in the recent Tunis meeting on the need to convene such a summit, albeit somewhat late.

[Abu Samrah] The Tunis meeting was intended to discuss the situation in the occupied Arab territory, and specifically the uprising and the issues it raised. What practical decisions or resolutions did you adopt to support the uprising?

[Al-Shar'] The seven-member committee stemming from the Arab League Council carried out political moves in the capitals of the five permanent Security Council member states. The committee expressed a unified Arab stand in all these five capitals. That is important and basic and is bound to strengthen the uprising's importance, prestige, and results in the international arena. In its tour of the capitals of the five big powers, the committee explained Israeli repressive practices and the tyranny, oppression, and arbitrariness inflicted on the Palestinian Arab people as a result of Israel's racist and expansionist policy of aggression. I believe all the world states were disgusted by [words indistinct]. Israel [words indistinct] the nature of its policy of aggression that does not seek or want peace, contrary to what it claims, particularly in Western circles. Thus I can say that the committee's tour has achieved a minimal level of positive results. We are still carrying out such moves. We will be making further contacts in the coming weeks.

[Abu Samrah] But concerning the practical decisions to support the uprising, the population there, according to reports emanating from the territory, need support, material support. Work opportunities have of late dwindled due to recent measures in the occupied land. Has it been decided to extend material support, or has the subject been deferred for the Arab summit to look into?

[Al-Shar'] As a frontline state, we in Syria feel [words indistinct] confrontation with the Zionist enemy. We also feel that the Palestinian cause, the central Arab cause, is not receiving equal attention from all Arab countries. Admittedly the attention of certain Arab states may have been diverted to other preoccupations away from the Arab-Israeli conflict. But in our opinion, the Israeli threat is not only directed against the Palestinian people's rights but also against all the Arab states. You will remember that for the mere fact that a sisterly Arab country—Saudi Arabia—exercised its sovereignty in the aquisition of arms and equipment, Israel began to threaten aggression against it.

As I have just said, Israeli threats are not directed against one Arab country in particular or just the frontline states. Israel's aggressive nature has been proved over the years. One can cite the Israeli attacks against the PLO offices in Tunis and the Iraqi nuclear reactor and now the threats against sisterly Saudi Arabia. Israeli aircraft are also said to have reached as far as Bab al-Mandab and the northernmost reaches of Arab North Africa. Thus we in Syria attach great importance to a unified Arab position, since Israel is not really interested in peace. All it says about peace is meant to mislead world, and especially Western, public opinion. Even Western public opinion has discovered the true nature of Israel's expansionist, aggressive designs through its behavior in the occupied land.

[Abu Samrah] In the event of an Israeli attack against the missiles Saudi Arabia purchased from the PRC, how will Syria react?

[Al-Shar'] We in Syria were the first to denounce the Israeli threat against sisterly Saudi Arabia. We said Syria stands alongside Saudi Arabia defending its land and sovereignty against any potential Israeli aggression.

[Abu Samrah] During your meetings in Tunis, Yasir 'Arafat was visiting Moscow. According to PRAVDA, Gorbachev told him he must recognize Resolution No 242 and the State of Israel. Did the point come up at the Tunis meetings?

[Al-Shar'] Naturally, we did not discuss this point at the Tunis meetings, but Faruq Qaddumi denied at these meetings that Gorbachev had asked 'Arafat to recognize

Israel. I would add that the recognition of Israel is not on the current agenda, but recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people is. Hence the prominence accorded by the media to the issue of recognizing Israel in order for one thing, to overshadow its repressive measures in the occupied land, and for another, to divert attention from the pressure of world public opinion on Israel to recognize the legitimate, national rights of the Palestinian Arab people.

[Abu Samrah] The newspaper PRAVDA has said this, and Moscow has not denied it, despite what Faruq Qaddumi said. For the first time, the USSR asks the PLO to recognize the state of Israel. In my opinion, as PRAVDA reported, the recognition of Resolution No 242 would help achieve a peaceful solution in the Middle East. Do you believe that this is an unusual USSR stand; is it a logical one?

[Al-Shar'] In all cases, it is known that the USSR and other big powers recognize Israel. The relevant question here is not whether the USSR recognizes Israel, because this has taken place since Israel was established. This is no secret. However, what we do know is that the USSR, through our contacts with it, through the recent visit of the seven-member Arab committee to Moscow, and through my meeting with Shevardnadze, has stressed its support for Arab rights and the need for Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and its recognition of the Palestinian people's national legitimate rights, including their right to self-determination.

The USSR side has also stressed that the international conference must be effective and must enjoy full powers. However, regarding the USSR's stand toward Resolutions Nos 242 and 338, it is natural for the USSR to support these two resolutions because it voted for them at the UN Security Council. On the other hand, the USSR has always referred to the other UN resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question. It does not ignore these resolutions. It emphasizes that these resolutions should be taken into consideration in any future settlement.

[Abu Samrah] Regarding what is being said about peace plans in the Middle East and what George Shutlz carries with him to the region in terms of solutions, it is noted that there is practical and full coordination between you and Jordan in terms of visits and contacts. However, we find that coordination between Syria and the PLO is almost absent?

[Al-Shar'] This is true, coordination between us and our brothers in Jordan has continued since the restoration of normal bilateral relations. The crux of this coordination is the joint stand toward the Arab-Israeli conflict and the international conference for peace in the Middle East. Our viewpoints have always been in agreement regarding the adoption of a unified Arab stand toward this issue. Our contacts and consultations with them are actually continuous. However, regarding the PLO, our consultations with Jordan and the adoption of a unified Arab stand have never been at the expense of the PLO or of any of the Palestinian people's rights. For Syria, this is a principled stand whether there are differences or not. The Syrian stand has always stressed the Palestinian people's full national rights.

[Abu Samrah] If the international conference were convened, given that its chances are very dim at this time, how do you view the Palestinian representation? Is it a separate delegation, this is if Israel accepts this, or as it has been said in the past a Jordanian-Palestinian joint delegation, or a joint Arab delegation. What is Syria's stand?

[Al-Shar'] This issue basically concerns the Palestinian people. When we say that there is a possibility to form a unified Arab delegation to the international conference, including the PLO, then this is because we believe that Israel's objective behind fragmenting the Arab side is to deal separately with each Arab state on the one hand, and to ignore the PLO and the Palestinian people on the other. Consequently, the idea of the joint Arab delegation is not new to Syria. Syria proposed this idea before Al-Sadat's visit to Jerusalem when the talk revolved at that time around the resumption of the Geneva conference in 1976 and 1977. In this regard, there is nothing new in the Syrian stand. I believe that it is wise for the Arab side to continue to be united and adhere to the principles and elements of a just and comprehensive peace so that we will be able to check the attempts of Israel and the United States, its strategic ally, to ignore any of these rights or to deal separately with each Arab side.

[Abu Samrah] George Shultz toured the region and left it with a general impression that what he carried was rejected—either completely or partially. He is now preparing to return to the region. You have, of course, informed him of the Syrian stand on what he was carrying when he visited Damascus. As we understood, you asked him to modify or develop his plan. Would you tell us what main points you and Shultz discussed and what points you insisted on?

[Al-Shar'] We presented to Shultz the elements of bases for a comprehensive and just settlement in the region. We told Mr Shultz clearly that any solution that does not take into consideration Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories—not from only part of them or most of them—and does not take into consideration the securing of the Palestinian Arab people's national rights, including their right to self-determination, such a solution will not be successful. As the Shultz initiative does not clearly provide for these two conditions, opportunities for its success are completely lacking. The Americans talk about a comprehensive settlement, but at the same time talk about stages. This means that they are not seriously talking about a comprehensive settlement. The Americans also talk about legitimate rights for the Palestinian people, but never mention any of these rights. They never talk about the right to self-determination or other rights. The Americans talk about Resolution No 242, but do not talk about a comprehensive and complete withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories in their plan. Therefore, we could not and cannot accept the Shultz plan as it was presented.

[Abu Samrah] However, was Shultz convinced by your viewpoint? Is he ready to develop his plan? Otherwise, why is he returning to the region if every party continues to stick to its stand?

[Al-Shar'] Shultz referred to the possibility of developing his plan. However, up until now we have not noticed any sign of such a development. In addition, regrettably, Shultz could not give clear answers to the questions posed to him. This is because he was unable to answer vital and essential questions on the plan. We believe that this inability is not a personal matter. Shultz is the secretary of state of a superpower. However, the inability comes from the United States being completely biased toward Israel and having a strategic alliance with it. Therefore, it cannot develop a stand expressing its orientations and interests apart from those of Israel. This is the point of the U.S. inability. It is a fatal point, we believe, in U.S. Middle East policy.

[Abu Samrah] It has been said that the main objective of Shultz' move at the beginning was to contain the uprising. However, eventually, it seems that since he could neither achieve anything for peace in the Middle East nor contain the uprising, Shultz wants at least to achieve some success regarding Lebanon. It seems that this has been discussed in the Syrian capital—a sort of U.S.-Syrian coordination to solve the Lebanese problem, or at least to secure presidential elections. It was also understood that Shultz met with Amin al-Jumayyil in Cyprus and informed him of the Syrian and U.S. stands on the issue. In your opinion, what happened, and why does George Shultz concentrate on this issue?

[Al-Shar'] It is incorrect to say there is U.S.-Syrian coordination on Lebanon. Why? This is because the issue, simply, is that the Americans conveyed President Amin al-Jumayyil's ideas to Damascus. For our part, we conveyed these ideas to the Lebanese opposition. Therefore, we cannot say that there is coordination between Syria and the United States about Lebanon. On the other hand, what has been conveyed to us by the Americans as ideas from Mr Amin al-Jumayyil have been presented to the Lebanese nationalist forces, which gave their opinion clearly about these ideas. Their opinion was in writing on this important issue. For our part, we briefed Mr Shultz when he asked about this issue [words indistinct] the nationalist Lebanese forces. He then conveyed them to President Amin al-Jumayyil when he met with him in Larnaca recently.

[Abu Samrah] According to press reports published after the meeting, Amin al-Jumayyil called for an integrated plan to resolve the Lebanese crisis. In your view, is Amin al-Jumayyil required to agree now to the plan—the reforms—in its entirety? Is he prepared to agree to it in the last months of his term?

[Al-Shar'] So far we do not have definite information on Shultz' meeting with Amin al-Jumayyil in Larnaca. However, it is clear to us from what we read in the newspapers published after the meeting that there is no reasonable response by Mr Amin al-Jumayyil to the ideas conveyed by Shultz. This takes us back to the beginning. Is President Amin al-Jumayyil really serious in wanting to achieve a settlement of the Lebanese crisis and political reforms before the end of his term?

[Abu Samrah] Of course, we will not ask you about Syria's candidate in the Lebanese presidential elections, because the answer will be that that is a purely Lebanese affair. However, it is clear the next Lebanese president nust be acceptable to a number of sides, especially Damascus and Washington. During Shultz' talks in the Syrian capital, did you feel there was a U.S. candidate for Lebanon?

[Al-Shar'] Once again I say that it is not right to draw a parallel between the Syrian and U.S. stands. Why? Because the relationship between Syria and Lebanon and the relationship between Lebanon and Syria is not at all similar to the relationship between Lebanon and the United States. As President Hafiz al-Asad repeatedly said, we and Lebanon are one people in two independent countries. Lebanon's worries are our worries. Lebanon's security concerns us. Lebanon's national unity must be achieved. Any solution that excludes Lebanon's national unity is a serious matter aimed against Syrian security in particular, and Arab security in general. Consequently, we believe the required solution in Lebanon is the solution to which the overwhelming majority of the fraternal Lebanese people agree.

The issue here is not a U.S. issue at all. Some factions in Lebanon wanted to call on U.S. help and we have nothing to do with that. The U.S. side conveyed President Amin al-Jumayyil's ideas, which were communicated to the national forces and others in Lebanon so that they can study them and reply to them. Our objective is to achieve a solution to the intractable Lebanese crisis. We welcome any state that can help in any measure in finding such a solution. We will not place obstacles in his way if he really aims to promote Lebanon's unity and Arabism and achieve genuine political reform that makes all Lebanese citizens equal in their rights and duties.

[Abu Samrah] Mr Minister, one last question. Some of those who aspire to the presidency of Lebanon visit the Syrian capital every now then. When they visit Syrian officials what do the latter say to them? Specifically, if any person who aspires to the presidency of Lebanon should come to you, what do you say to him? Or what have you said to him? Perhaps you have received in this office some of those who aspire to the presidency in Lebanon?

[Al-Shar'] We say to any Lebanese who visits us what I have said a short while ago: We strongly support all that helps Lebanon to end its ordeal, restores normal life to it, and achieves its national unity, security, and independence. The matter is a Lebanese affair, an internal political reform. No outside party can substitute for Lebanon. The difference is that more than any other country in the world Syria is concerned about what the Lebanese citizen wants to achieve in the way of security, stability, national unity, and safeguarding its Arabism and its survival as a fraternal Arab country affiliated to the Arab nation and to Arab culture and history.

Vice President Addresses Rally on Evacuation Day

JN171550 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1115 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Our popular masses have crowned their commemoration of the 42d anniversary of the colonial evacuation of the homeland with a key speech rally organized today by the Damascus branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party at 1100 in the auditorium of Damascus University. The function was attended by Comrades 'Abdallah Al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party; Dr Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, vice president; 'Abd al-Qadir Qaddurah, People's Assembly speaker; Mahmud al-Zu'bi, prime minister; Sulayman Qaddah, assistant regional secretary general of the party; some members of the regional and national commands; some members of the Central Command of the National Progressive Front; and some cabinet ministers as well as the general public.

The celebration opened with the Syrian Arab anthem and a minute's silence in honor of the souls of the martyrs.

Comrade Dr Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, vice president, delivered a speech for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party in which he said: The departure of the oppressive colonialists from the Arab land of Syria is one of the events that touches the hearts and moves the feelings of the Syrian Arab masses, as the evacuation signifies large, lofty meanings, deriving from the splendor of the anniversary and the greatness of the event. The evacuation we are observing was the sweet fruit of the struggle of the Arab people in this country over a 25-year period during which the colonialists knew no peace. To cite the struggler President Hafiz al-Asad's pan-Arab spech on the 25th anniversary of the glorious March revolution: The spirit of struggle was pervasive at a time when our masses lacked the ability for well-planned organization, but the general militant spirit was a rallying point for the masses.

Comrade Mashariqah said: The Syrian Arab people held themselves responsible for liberating not only Syria, since they look upon themselves as an integral part of the Arab nation. Their responsibility was therefore a pan-Arab one. On Syria's commitment to a pan-Arab struggle, the vice president said: Syria's commitment to the causes of pan-Arab struggle has been absolute and its postures toward various pan-Arab issues, above all the Palestine cause, principled and constant. Hence Syria has been the principal party to the Arab-Israeli conflict since the founding of the Zionist movement up to the creation of its aggressive, expansionist base in Palestine, where the heroes of the stones are daily standing up to the aggressive usurpers and whose revolution is the pride of Arab masses throughout the Arab world and the object of appreciation by all the free souls around the world.

The vice president hailed the Palestinian uprising by saying: Nothing expresses an assessment of the uprising and the role of the heroes of the stones in Palestine better than the words of President al-Asad, leader of the Arab nation along the paths of victory and liberation, in a pan-Arab speech to mark the 25th anniversary of the glorious March revolution. The president said: Current events in the occupied land are a source of pride for us, which we should understand and recognize regardless of their short-term tangible consequences. This is because what is happening testifies to the resolve of the Arab nation, fortifies this determination, illustrates the unity of the Arab nation, and deepens the spirit of the nation. We send our salutations to the tenacious people in Palestine. We send our salutations to the tenacious people in the Golan. We send our salutations to the tenacious people in southern Lebanon. We assure all of you—our kinfolk and children—that we are a monolith in a common battle until victory.

Comrade Mashariqah said in conclusion: Revolutionary Syria, Ba'thist Syria, Al-Asad's Syria will always be the impregnable fortress of defiance in the Arab region and the only trench of confrontation that faces up to the Arab nation's adversaries and shields its honor, dignity, pride, and rights. [passage omitted]

Paper Cited on Stand Against 'Zionist Danger'

JN180951 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0445 GMT 18 Apr 88

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "The Zionist Danger and the Required Arab Stand," AL-THAWRAH writes: Zionist ambitions in the Arab homeland have no limits. The Zionist danger is targeted against the entire Arab nation—territory and existence. No one, whether he is far from or close to the confrontation arena, is far from the danger. There is a great deal of tangible proof for this. The new aggressions against Tunisia's sovereignty and independence and the assassination of Mr Khalil al-Wazir were not the first and will not be the last.

The Zionist entity follows a firm, aggressive, and expansionist line against the Arab nation. The Zionist enemy's leaders implement this course relying on unlimited U.S. military and economic support and on the umbrella of U.S. protection at the international level. It is no accident that the new Zionist crime in Tunisia was perpetrated with the use of the U.S. veto at the UN Security

Council to prevent the issuance of a resolution condemning Israel's crimes and brutal practices against Arab citizens in the occupied territory. The U.S. stand encourages Israel to continue its aggressive policy and gives it the green light to commit more brutal crimes against Arab citizens and countries. This U.S. stand also gives Israel the political leeway to avert any deterrent measure in the international community.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Syria has called on the Arab nation to realize the dimensions of the Zionist danger and to prepare for its confrontation. Syria also affirms that our conflict against Zionism is the most important and serious basic battle. Syria worked and is still working honestly and earnestly to mobilize the nation's potentials in a major battle against the Zionist enemy out of its sound view, right analysis of the events and their developments, and its attentive realization of the nature of the conflict with Zionism because it is a conflict for existence—a conflict that the Arabs have no other alternative but to face. The Arabs must effectively prepare to decide this confrontation in the interest of the Arab nation and its central cause, the Palestinian cause—its existence and its generation's future.

U.S. Veto on Israel Termed 'Hostile Stand'

JN171421 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1135 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Washington has added a new hostile stand against the Arabs by using the veto to halt the condemnation of the Zionist enemy for its violations of international agreements and its ugly crimes in the occupied Arab territories. The U.S. Administration went even further when it announced that it will sign a new memorandum of understanding with Israel on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the creation of Israel's terroristic entity, an entity that transformed its terrorism from the gang level, which accompanied the beginning of Zionist settlement, particularly after the ominous Balfour Declaration of 1917, to the state level. For the past 4 decades, this state has not abated in implementing its aggressive and expansionist objectives in the context of the compatible designs of both the Talmudic Zionist plan to establish Greater Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates with U.S. designs to contain the Middle East.

President Reagan has affirmed the compatibility of these interests during his meeting with Yitzhaq Shamir, the enmey's prime minister, in his latest visit to the United States. President Reagan said: U.S. policy in the Middle East is defined in light of common U.S.-Israeli interests and commitments. Through these common interests and commitments, the U.S. Administration intensified its moves in the Middle East under the cover of the presentation of ideas to solve the conflict in the region. These ideas were, in letter and spirit, a copy of the continuous U.S. plans, of which the Camp David accords were the worst formula.

What Washington proposed was not peace based on the principles of justice, comprehensiveness, and removal of obstacles to its achievement. What it proposed aimed to save the Zionist enemy from its increasing dilemma resulting from the tempestuous popular uprising in the occupied Arab territories. It also aimed to provide a political cover that will encourage the enemy to commit the ugliest racist, Nazi crimes to abort the uprising and to stop the world community's will from transforming its total condemnation of Israel's oppressive and repressive measures into a binding international resolution to stop the Zionist enemy's violations of the Geneva conventions and convening an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Such a meeting would be a fully authorized conference to lay the foundations for a just peace in the region on the basis of total Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, guranteeing the Palestinian Arab people's national inalienable rights, and punishing the Zionist enemy for its savage crimes and bloody terrorism against our Arab people.

When the United States opposes internatioanl unanimity and goes to the extreme in its support and protection for the Zionist enemy to continue its crimes and challanges of the world community's will and international laws, and when the United States changes its extreme hostile policy toward the Arabs and the cause for peace into a firm Israeli policy, then the United States not only manifests the compatibility of its interests with the Zionist plan in the Middle East but also puts itself in an opposing position to the Arabs, the international resolutions, and the world community's will as the party responsible for the continuation of dangers in this region, which is already volatile.

He who sows aggression, expansion, and oppression will only harvest shame and disgrace.

AL-THAWRAH on 'Anti-Arab' Stand in U.S. Veto

JN161243 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0445 GMT 16 Apr 88

[From the press review]

[Text] On Washington's veto to torpedo a draft resolution presented by the nonaligned countries at the UN Security Council to condemn the Zionist enemy's repressive, inhuman practices against our people in the occupied homeland, AL-THAWRAH writes:

Once again, the United States discloses its blatant, aggressive, anti-Arab face and the nature and essence of its policy that supports and protects Israel on the international scene. Although the U.S. veto is neither new nor strange in the context of the U.S. stand vis-a-vis protecting Israel as the Zionist entity from international condemnation, it comes, at this particular time, to give many prominent indications of the U.S. position toward the Arab Palestinian people's heroic uprising in the occupied homeland. Washington's political move, based on this uprising, aims at bypassing and aborting this uprising as well as at saving the Zionist entity from its effects and at protecting it from its devastating results on all levels.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The new veto comes to affirm Washington's blessing of the terrorist acts practiced by the occupation army and its Zionist settlers against our steadfast Palestinian people in the occupied homeland. This veto offers categorical proof that during his recent visit to Washington the United States gave enemy Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir the green light to escalate acts of repression to extinguish the torch of the uprising, uproot it, and silence the voice of Arab truth, which has become louder with the stones of Palestine. Kissinger disclosed this fact.

AL-THAWRAH continues: On the footsteps of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz in the region, the enemy escalated its Nazi, repressive acts such as collective punishments; demolition of houses and villages; killing of women, children, and old men; expulsion; deportation; imposition of curfew; imposition of military and economic siege; and the usage of new weapons in the repressive acts such as the poisonous gases and the heavy and light weapons against the defenseless civilians who are armed only with belief in land and truth and the will of struggle and confrontation. Yes, the enemy practiced all methods. It used repression, poisonous gases, and light and heavy weapons against the defenseless civilians, who are armed only with belief in land and truth, the will of struggle and confrontation, and the determination to continue the struggle until they regain the land, rights, and sacred places. Do all these acts not deserve the condemnation of the international community, which condemned and denounced these hideous crimes and these methods which remind the world of the Nazi and fascist crimes?

In Washington's value system, this does not deserve condemnation. Washington's charters on human rights and its politicians' boasting about terrorism remain inactive and are only used against the coerced peoples, who are struggling against colonialist hegemony in all parts of the world. Who knows? Tomorrow the Americans might come up with a rabid media campaign to condemn terrorism carried out by the heroes of the stones, who are defending their land and rights and whom Israel is confronting with chemical, poisonous gases; with repression; demolition of houses; uprooting trees; burying people alive; and aborting women. A last question: Whose peace is Washington claiming to search for if it does not condemn these Zionist crimes?

Paper Cites U.S. 'Aggression' on Oil Platforms

JN191048 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
0445 GMT 19 Apr 88

[From the press review]

[Text] In its comment, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH writes on the U.S. aggression in the Gulf. It stresses that this aggression further escalates tension in the region, especially since the United States itself does not conceal its imperialist ambitions in the Gulf region through mobilizing its fleets and warships in its waters, through considering the Gulf a U.S. lake, and through interfering in the domestic affairs of the region's states on the pretext that these states are exposed to alleged dangers. By escalating the conflict in the Gulf, and by its involvement in the Iraq-Iran war as a direct party to this war, the United States reveals the dimensions of the conspiracy being hatched, prepared, and planned by the Reagan administration under the current circumstances of the Arab nation. The U.S. military interference in the Gulf region aims to add fuel to the fire to exhaust the resources and potential of the region's states and to spread terror and horror via the U.S. policy of force.

AL-THAWRAH adds: All signs indicate that by attacking the Iranian oil platforms, the United States seeks to escalate tension and further complicate developments there in a manner that would serve the attempts to turn the Gulf region into a floating base for the Untied States and its war fleets, and to impose its aggressive role and imperialist decision of tightening its control over the strategic oil straits in the Gulf.

Moreover, we cannot separate this imperialist U.S. move from Israel's serious impasse due to the escalation of our people's uprising in the occupied homeland, from the feverish U.S. attempts to save Israel from its impasse by circumventing and aborting the uprising whether by political or diplomatic means, or by extending all support for Israel to allow it to continue its fascist and terrorist policy against our people in the occupied Palestinian homeland. Under these circumstances, the United States seeks to divert the attention of the international community from the uprising and its revolutionary facts, to focus attention on developments in the Gulf, and to ignore the epics of heroism, struggle, and sacrifice that are being recorded every day by our people against the Zionist occupation and its fascist and terrorist practices in the occupied homeland.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says: This U.S. endeavor is a return to the known U.S. policy of making the Iraq-Iran war the major conflict in the region rather than our Arab nation's central and major conflict against the Zionist enemy. Just as the United States failed several times in the past, it will fail now and in the future because our Arab nation is determined to continue its battle against the Zionist enemy and its occuaption of our Arab land. Our Arab nation is also determiend to escalate its struggle in order to continue to have the Palestine question as its central and major cause. No conflict can rise above the conflict of the Arab right against the Zionist falsehood.

Afghanistan

Keshtmand Addresses Tripartite Conference

LD191747 Kabul BAKHTAR in Dari 1130 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, 19 Apr (BAKHTAR)—Text of the speech delivered this morning by Prime Minister Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand at the opening session of the tripartite conference of scientists and socioeconomists from the Soviet Union and the United States.

Esteemed friends and conference participants:

First of all, I welcome the arrival to Afghanistan of the Soviet and U.S. delegations comprised of men of knowledge and social figures. The convocation of this international tripartite conference among the Afghan, Soviet and U.S. delegates, and the free discussion of issues concerning Afghanistan, is deemed a good initiative. I am confident that in the course of the 3-day conference many realities and facts about Afghan society will become clearer than ever before to the participants.

I would like to present to you preliminary information about the socioeconomic situation in our country, Afghanistan, and the prospects for its growth.

Before the April Revolution, Afghanistan was very backward socially and economically. This legacy remains. The revolution moved our people, and if the undeclared war against our country had not been started, and if hostile forces who were waiting abroad had not intervened, through Pakistan, in the internal affairs of our country, our people's movement forward toward the creation of a new and democratic society would have gained momentum.

The 9-year-old war imposed on our country and the subversion by counterrevolutionary elements exported from abroad have brought great economic and human losses to our people. However, despite this difficult situation resulting from the war, we were able to create a system of state administration in accordance with the interests of the people. During the course of these years, our country's economy has consistently progressed and grown.

During the past year, since the national reconciliation policy was announced as our major policy, we have undertaken large measures—in proportion to our country's capabilities—to extend assistance to various strata of people. The national reconciliation policy has been well received among the masses. In the course of implementing this policy, our national economy has gained further impetus, which in return has influenced the acceleration of the national reconciliation process.

Our economy has two spheres, and the private sector occupies [word indistinct] attention. In recent years the economy's private sector has gained significant momentum.

We see a bright future for our economy. At present, we have planned for the long-term development of our national economy to the year 2000. These plans cover various aspects of our national economy and the role of the state, private, mixed, and cooperative sectors have been broadely envisaged in them.

To accomplish economic and social development plans and to revitalize destroyed establishments, as in the past we need the assistance of foreign countries and international organizations. So far, the Soviet Union has granted tremendous economic assistance to our country and people. Objective opportunities contained in the law on domestic and foreign investment are widely available for foreign investors. We will study any kind of specific proposals for investment in economic projects including those by U.S. investors.

At present our country has active trade relations with more than 50 countries of the world, including the United States. Unfortunately, however, 3 years ago the U.S. Administration imposed unjust and unilateral sanctions on trade with Afghanistan. We know that some circles exist in the United States and its administration which, regardless of the truth and realities of our country, are dealing against us in a hostile manner. These circles exert great influence over the decisions of the rulers of this country. For example, as a result of the exertion of their influence, the U.S. Congress has approved a resolution on Afghanistan dated 29 February of the current year. In this resolution, it is said, among other things, that it should be demanded that 10,000 Afghan children who have been sent to the Soviet Union should return home. Not only is this allegation untrue, but it is an open and harsh interference in the internal affairs of our country.

The truth is that the total number of Afghan students in the Soviet Union is near 10,000, and there are fewer than 1,500 orphan children for whom, in accordance with our request and that of their relatives, the Soviet Union has provided facilities for education and training. The children receive education in the Soviet Union by Afghan teachers in the spirit of patriotism and Afghan traditions. They come to their country for holidays and certainly will return to this country at the end of their general education. This is how such sheer and interventionist lies constitute part of the documents of the U.S. Senate and how it damages the credibility of documents from this important national house.

It is worth mentioning that on the eve of signing the Geneva agreements, a conservative group of Congressmen were putting pressure on the U.S. Administration to prevent it from signing these documents. There are individuals in the United States who are giving aid in the name of refugees. Let us demand that they do not provide assistance for weapons for the continuation of bloodshed in Afghanistan, but for noble purposes for the refugees returning to Afghanistan. I am confident that by holding useful and cordial discussions, all participants in this conference will reach a common conclusion, which will be the only way to achieve a political settlement in Afghanistan, the cessation of war and bloodshed, and to accept reconciliation against the continuation of war and armed confrontation.

The signed Geneva agreements, which have acquired the status of legal international accords, have prepared the ground for the complete political solution to the situation around Afghanistan. Now it requires goodwill and readiness for national reconciliation on the part of the opposition. The Geneva agreements reject any kind of interference by Pakistan and Afghanistan in each other's internal affairs, and prohibit any kind of activities and hostile measures for interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. This has been guaranteed by the United States and the Soviet Union.

I would like to address the esteemed U.S. personalities attending this conference in saying if bloodshed continues in Afghanistan as a result of arms supplied to the opposition of the Afghan revolution, then in the eyes of our people the United States will remain an organizer and instigator of war and tension. Certainly you do not want the historical responsibility of this to rest with the United States. I am confident that the esteemed U.S. personalities present here will accomplish their part in assessing the present realities of Afghan society in a worthwhile manner. I would like to invite them to pay another visit, in 1 year, to observe the results of implementing the national reconciliation policy in our country.

I wish the conference success in its work and for all its participants the high spirit of fruitful work and discussion in a sincere and cordial atmosphere.

Thank you for your attention.

India Closes Jalalabad Consulate; Safety Cited

BK191128 Hong Kong AFP in English 1110 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Islamabad, April 19 (AFP)—India has shut down its consulate in Jalalabad following reports that the Soviet Union will pull out of the eastern garrison town soon, Western diplomats said Tuesday. The Jalalabad Consulate has "ceased operation," they said, adding that New Delhi had "withdrawn all Indian nationals, removed documents and sealed the facility which is now under the guard of a lone Afghan national local employee."

The Indian Embassy in Kabul denies that the consulate has been officially closed, but has confirmed that two officers have been withdrawn for "personal reasons," the diplomats said. The junior embassy staff "concede that safety of the facility and its staff prompted the cessation of the operation," after a Geneva agreement signed last week on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, said the diplomats, who asked not to be identified.

Quoting reliable sources, they said Indian officials told the Kabul government that the consulate was closed due to a lack of regular civilian flights between Kabul and Jalalabad.

Seats on daily military flights between the two cities were offered to the consular staff, but "Indian officials declined," they said.

But India's decision was based on reports from East European and Indian diplomats that Soviet troops will soon be withdrawn from the Jalalabad area, about 120 kilometres (75) miles from Pakistan's northwest frontier, they said. There is speculation that the town may fall to Afghan guerrillas after a Soviet withdrawal. Jalalabad airport continues to be the target of repeated guerrilla attacks and diplomats said two helicopters were destroyed on the ground by rebels last week.

Rebel sources said said hostility was running high against the town's Indian community—which includes many Hindus and Sikhs largely engaged in trade. Quoting a reliable source, the diplomats said Hindus and Sikhs staged a procession through the city to a Hindu-Sikh shrine following the victory of a Sikh candidate against a Moslem in recent elections.

A Moslem crowd angered by the rally moved on the shrine, killing a government guard who attempted to halt the violence, they said. Six people were killed in the ensuing clash between the Indians and the crowd, the diplomats said. Another report said a small bomb or hand grenede also exploded outside the place of worship, killing among others several ethnic Indians. The diplomats stressed that the mujahidin were not involved in the "strictly communal violence."

Najibullah Receives Komsomol Chief Mironenko

LD192003 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] In his office this morning Esteemed Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA and president of Afghanistan, met with Viktor Ivanovich Mironenko, first secretary of the All-Union Komsomol, and the accompanying delegation. During this meeting talks were conducted on the international youth movement and cooperation between Afghan and Soviet youth. Farid Ahmad Mozdak, first secretary of the DYOA, was also present during the reception.

Kawiani Meets With CPCZ's Bilak in Prague

LD190630 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0436 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Prague, April 18, BAKHTAR—Najmuddin Kawiani, Politburo member and secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, who is currently on an official and friendly visit to the Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia met Vasil Bilak, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia today. During the meeting Kawiani briefed the other side on the gains of the policy of national reconciliation, the Geneva talks and the signing of the related documents.

In his turn, Vasil Bilak promised all kinds of assistance of his country to the PDPA and to the people of Afghanistan.

Leaders Receive Message From Hungarian Officials

LD192024 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Esteemed Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA and president of Afghanistan, and Premier Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand have received a message thanking them for their message to Janos Kadar, general secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party; Karoly Nemeth, president of the Presidential Council of Hungary; and Karoly Grosz, chairman of the Council of Ministers, on the occasion of the 43d anniversary of the independence of Hungary.

The message states they hope that the developing cooperation between the people of the Republic of Afghanistan and the people of Hungary will increase in the interests of the people of the two countries.

Armenian SSR Delegation Departs 20 Apr

LD201025 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0415 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 19, BAKHTAR—The Armenian SSR delegation headed by Rodig Vardanian, minister of social services and chairman of friendship and cultural relations of that republic who was here for an official and friendly visit left for home.

National Front Message to Afro-Asian Group

LD170943 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0424 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 16, BAKHTAR—The Central Council of National Front of the Republic of Afghanistan in a message sent to the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation, AAPSO, and the World Peace Council has praised the political realism shown by all sides involved in Geneva talks. It also regards the signing of Geneva accords on a political settlement relating to Afghanistan as a great practical step for the relaxation of tension in the region and the world over.

The National Front, says the message, considers it its duty to express its profound gratitude to the good offices of the UN secretary general and its special representative, Diego Cordovez, for their indefatiguable efforts in getting the Geneva talks to succeed between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The peace-loving people of Afghanistan are prepared to keep on its campaign alongside the AAPSO and other peace-loving organizations for ensuring world peace and detente, points out the message.

Politburo Assesses Economic Development

LD161027 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0512 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 14, BAKHTAR—The periodical session of the Politburo of the PDPA CC was held here today. For realization of the resolutions of February plenum of the Central Committee of the PDPA the Politburo discussed matters related to the economic growth, improvement of organisation and maintenance of mutual beneficial cooperations between the state and the national traders, and indicated that the nation-wide conference of national traders be held in July of the current year.

The Politburo assessed results of the nation-wide work emulation drives in the last Afghan year. As a result of the organisation of work emulation drives plan of production was fulfilled in most industrial, constructional and transport institutions in state and mixed sectors in the last Afghan year. The state got millions of afghanis as revenue as a result of sparing raw materials, energy, labour force and over fulfillment of production plans the Politburo indicated.

The Politburo approved a resolution in regard to awarding memorial banners of 10th anniversary of April Revolution along with certificates, cash prizes, orders and medals of the Republic of Afghanistan to the winners of the work emulation drives. The Politburo approved the visit of PDPA CC delegation to the GDR, West Berlin and the People's Republic of Bulgaria. The visit took place in March of the current year. The Politburo of the PDPA CC discussed a number of internal and world issues as well.

Methods To Increase Agricultural Yields Viewed

LD160658 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0415 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 15, OANA—BAKHTAR—An area of one million five hundred and fifty-four thousand hectares of irrigated land and an area of five hundred thirty thousand hectares of unirrigated land will come under cultivation during the spring cultivation campaign this year started 20 March 1988. The campaign which was commenced in the second half of March 1988 is carried out with full speed throughout the country.

Seventy-eight thousand four hundred and eighty-seven hectares of land by agricultural cooperatives and an area of nine hundred seventy hectares of land will be cultivated by state farms. Also, an area of seventy-five thousand hectares of land will be cultivated with cotton and another area of five hundred hectares will come under beet root cultivation.

For the increment of agriculture yields broader facilities are provided to farmers by the state. For instance, at a cost of eighty-five million afghanis, pesticide and insecticide, a quantity of eighty-six thousand seven hundred and sixty tons of chemical fertiliser, five thousand two hundred and fifty tons of improved cotton sowing seed, thirty tons of beet root seed and an amount of eighty-nine million and three hundred ninety-three thousand afghanis bank credits will be provided by the state to the farmers during the said period.

Armed Group Apprehended in Nangarhar Province

LD191827 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] A group of armed extremists which entered our country in order to disrupt the peaceful life of our compatriots was discovered and seized by the security forces of Nangarhar Province yesterday in the Towr Ghar area. The military section of the BIA reports that the seized arms consisted of ground-to-ground missiles, a recoilless gun, a mortar, a rocket launcher, a DshK, assorted arms, and tens of thousands of cartridges.

India

Gandhi Assails Pakistan's Position on Siachen

BK191608 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has said that Pakistan has not only failed to respond to India's concerted moves to normalize relations, but has thwarted every suggestion to defuse tension along the borders. Addressing the Army Commanders' Conference in New Delhi today, Mr Gandhi said during his meetings with President Ziaul Haq and the prime minister, Mr Junejo, more than 20 specific suggestions were made to improve relations. These included expansion of bilateral trade, exchange of academic and cultural teams, besides the offer of a full-fledged comprehensive peace and friendship treaty. Mr Gandhi regretted that Pakistan continues to abet terrorism in Punjab. There is also evidence that those indulging in narcotics trade are receiving assistance from across the border. Pakistan's attitude in Siachen is also a matter of serious concern, Mr Gandhi added.

The prime minister also expressed concern over Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. He said although the Afghanistan accord should lessen the tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan, there is no indication of any reduction in U.S. supplies of armament to Pakistan. Mr Gandhi hoped that the accord on Afghanistan will help in restoring peace and stability in the region. India, he said, has made quiet contribution toward this process.

On Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, the prime minister reiterated New Delhi's determination to implement the agreement in full measure.

About India's relations with China, Mr Gandhi said we look forward to a better atmosphere for resolving the problems between the two countries.

2 Pakistani Rangers Killed in Cross Border Fire

BK191010 Hong Kong AFP in English 0951 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] New Delhi, April 19 (AFP)—Two Pakistani border guards were killed apparently by cross fire, in a gunfight between Indian security forces and suspected Sikh militants on the Punjab border, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported Tuesday. Pakistan lodged a protest over the incident at a routine monthly meeting Monday of sector commanders on the border in Amritsar District, the agency said.

The Pakistani guards, known as Rangers, were apparently trapped in cross-fire on April 14 between India's Border Security Force (BSF) and Sikh militants allegedly trying to cross into Punjab from the Pakistani side of the border, PTI said.

At least eight of the suspected militants, who were armed with Chinese-made AK-47 assault rifles, escaped back into Pakistan, BSF Deputy Inspector-General Bharat Bhushan was quoted as saying in Amritsar District Tuesday. He said they belonged to a group of Sikhs which tried to cross into India on April 9 and fought a gunbattle with BSF men. Two Sikh militants were killed in that shoot-out. Mr. Bhushan did not rule out the possibility that the Rangers were helping the militants to cross over, PTI said.

India has frequently charged Pakistan with backing a Sikh militant campaign for a separate homeland in Punjab which has left about 730 people dead this year. It has accused Islamabad of providing a safe sanctuary for militants to launch hit-and-run raids in the northern frontier state. Pakistan denies the charges.

Home Minister Rebuts Ziaul Haq Statement

BK191341 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] The home minister, Mr Buta Singh, has strongly rebutted the Pakistan president, General Ziaul Haq's reported assertion that his country is not helping the terrorists in Punjab. The minister declared that Pakistan is not only conniving and conspiring in the terrorist violence, but there is active participation of some of the Pakistani Government agencies.

Quoting newspaper reports, Mr Buta Singh said two Pakistan rangers were killed in an exchange of fire with India's paramilitary force personnel when they crossed over to India to carry away dead bodies of two terrorists.

Mr Buta Singh said any misleading propaganda even by the head of the government cannot change the fact. Mr Buta Singh was replying to the debate on the demands of the Home Ministry in the Lok Sabha today. The demands were later passed.

The home minister said the government will come down heavily on the terrorists killing innocent people. But doors are always open for talks with those who favor a negotiated settlement of the Punjab problem within the Constitution.

On the issue of Darjeeling Hills, Mr Buta Singh said there is no ambivalence in government stand. The government has been steadfast and firm in condemning violence. However, there have been reports of harassment of some people by CPI-M party workers.

Minister on Plan To 'Stamp Out' Sikh Militancy

BK191333 Hong Kong AFP in English 1238 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] New Delhi, April 19 (AFP)—India's influential Internal Security Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram Tuesday said the government would stamp out Sikh militancy in Punjab before seeking a political solution to the issue. "The search for a meaningful political solution could be possible only when terrorism (in Punjab) is stamped out," Mr. Chidambaram told a top level meeting of police and intelligence chiefs here.

His statement appeared to scotch widespread speculation here that the government was currrently engaged in seeking a dialogue with Sikh militants on a political solution to the 5-year-old separatist campaign in Punjab. On March 4, the government released from prison five militant-leaning Sikh high priests in a move seen as opening a channel for a possible dialogue with the separatists. But hard-line militants have refused to soften their stance, saying no dialogue would be possible on anything short of a separate Sikh homeland called Khalistan, or Land of the Pure, in Punjab.

The hard-hitting statement came after security forces in Punjab killed 17 people in stepped-up operations since the the weekend. "We are clear today that time has not come to relax our guard in the fight against terrorism which has become a threat to national unity and integrity," the minister said.

Mr. Chidambaram, who also holds the portfolio of minister of state for home affairs, asked the officers to streamline and upgrade the ground-level intelligence of India's police force.

More than 730 people, including Hindus, have died in Punjab this year—the bloodiest period so far in the Sikhs' battle for a homeland.

The three-day annual conference is scheduled to draw up comprehensive plans Wednesday to combat Sikh militants in Punjab, communist guerrillas in four other states and communal riots between Hindus and Moslems in the rest of the country, official sources said.

Sikh Pilgrims Note Pakistani Aid to Terrorists

BK191558 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] The experience of Sikh pilgrims, who visited various shrines in Pakistan recently on the occasion of Baisakhi [harvesting month], belie Islamabad's claim of noninvolvement in India's internal affairs. According to a PTI correspondent, who accompanied the pilgrims, the visitors were confronted by small organized groups of people shouting slogans in favor of the secessionist movement in Punjab. The pilgrims also spoke of other incidents which showed that Pakistan was training and helping the terrorists.

11 People Killed in Punjab

BK191257 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] In Punjab, 11 persons, including an assistant subinspector of police and 4 intruders, have been gunned down since last night. The police officer was shot dead by terrorists in his native village in Jullundur District. A primary school teacher was shot dead in Amritsar District.

Terrorists entered a dera [hostel attached to a religious shrine] and shot dead its leader and his disciple. Two persons were killed in Ferozepore and Gurdaspur Districts. An under-trial, who tried to escape, was shot dead in Amritsar District.

Four intruders from Pakistan were chased by BSF [Border Security Force] last night. One intruder was apprehended. The arrested person has been identified as a Pakistani national. Narcotics valued at around 8 lakh rupees were seized.

Akali Dal Leader, 3 Others Shot Dead

BK209000 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] The Union Government has appointed Mr J.F. Ribeiro, the director general of the Punjab Police, as adviser to the state governor. A new director general of police is being appointed soon.

A PTI report from Punjab says terrorists shot dead a Unified Akali Dal leader, Mr Hira Singh, and his son Inderjit in village (Buddhaved) in Kapurthala early this morning. The leader's wife was injured in the shootout. In another incident a priest was gunned down in a gurdwara [Sikh temple] in Gilwali village in Amritsar District last night. Security forces recovered 16 missiles during a raid in Kalanor village in Gurdaspur District last night. An official spokesman in Chandigarh said the missiles were concealed in a field of eucalyptus plants.

'Extremists' Kill 10 Soldiers in Manipur

BK200332 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] In Manipur, 10 CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force] jawans [soldiers] were killed in an ambush by the extremists of the underground National Socialist Council of Nagaland at (Selumpunch) area in Tamenglong District yesterday evening. According to official sources in Imphal, the CRPF personnel were escorting treasury officers from Imphal to Tamenglong. The extremists used sophisticated weapons in the ambush and two of the CRPF vehicles were burnt down. Top security officials have rushed to the area. The international border along with Manipur has been sealed.

6 Killed in Maharashtra Police Shooting

BK200334 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] In Maharashtra, six persons were killed and five injured, when police resorted to firing to disperse two violent groups who indulged in clashes in Brahamapuri and Mausi in Chandrapur District yesterday. According to the police, six police officials were also injured in stabbing and stone throwing incidents.

Parliament Debates U.S. Arms Supply to Pakistan

BK200858 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0830 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] The government is maintaining a constant watch on acquisition of military equipment by neighboring countries that have a bearing on our security. The minister of state for defense, Mr Santosh Mohan Dev, told the Lok Sabha today during question time that adequate steps will be taken to meet any eventuality. The members expressed concern over the reported U.S. decision to supply sophisticated arms to Pakistan.

Sharing their concern, the defense minister, Mr K.C. Pant, said the United States has a certain global perspective and regards Pakistan as a frontline state. He asserted that India does not share this view. The minister said India has brought to the notice of the United States several times that the arms earlier supplied to Pakistan to face a threat of Afghanistan had been used against India.

Sri Lankan Militants Arrested in Tamil Nadu

BK201157 Colombo International Service in English
1045 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Police in Madras have detained about 400 people, including about 100 Sri Lankan Tamil militants, in preparation for a visit to southern India by Premier Rajiv Gandhi. Mr Gandhi arrives in Tamil Nadu State on Friday [22 April] to attend the 3-day session of the All India Congress Committee, the highest policy-making panel of the Congress-I Party.

Authorities in Tamil Nadu, which is currently under direct rule of President Ramaswamy Venkataraman, have decided to take strict security measures for Mr Gandhi's visit following a recent series of bomb blasts there. A senior police official said that arrests in the past 2 days were designed as a preventative measure and to immobilize suspective Tamil militants in the area while Mr Gandhi is in Tamil Nadu. He said no separatist leaders had been detained.

Officials said that a total of 67 members of the Liberation [Tigers] of Tamil Eelam—LTTE—and more than 30 members of the smaller Eelam People's Democratic Party and the Eelam Revolutionary Organization [as heard] had been taken into custody. Police suspect that a number of recent explosions in Tamil Nadu and elsewhere in the state may have been the work of Sri Lankan Tamil separatists.

About 400 persons, including over 200 [number as heard] Sri Lankan Tamil militants belonging to various groups, were taken into preventative custody yesterday from Madras and the neighboring Chengalpattu District in connection with the All India Congress Committee-I session beginning on 23 April at (Malaimalay Nagar) about 45 km from Madras. Tamil Nadu State is under direct rule of the president following the dissolution of the state legislature in late January. Elections to the state government are due in the middle of this year.

Iran

Velayati Letter to ICO Condemns Kuwait

LD201130 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] In the wake of Kuwait's overt cooperation with the Iraqi Zionist regime, and this regime's use of the Bubiyan Island, Foreign Minister Velayati sent a message to Mr Sharifuddin Pirzada, the ICO secretary general. The message says: Since the start of military aggression by the Iraqi regime, the Kuwaiti Government has placed all its facilities at the disposal of that regime, and the Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly stated that Iraq has continuously used Bubiyan Island as a base against Iran.

The statement also says: The Government of Kuwait has been frequently warned that Iraqi use of Bubiyan Island indicates Kuwait's entry into the war arena in support of the Iraqi regime. The message by our country's foreign affairs minister to the ICO secretary general refers to the point that the financial and spiritual support provided for the Iraqi war-mongering regime by Kuwait during the imposed war is a blatant violation of the ICO Charter. The message stresses: The Government of Kuwait is responsible for any consequences for its support of the aggressive Iraqi regime.

Velayati Sends Letter to Nonaligned Movement

LD191328 Tehran IRNA in English 1315 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 19, IRNA—Following the unprovoked U.S. attacks on Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf, Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati sent a letter to his Zimbabwean counterpart and chairman of the Non-aligned Movement's (NAM) foreign ministers, Witness Mangwende today.

"The war mongering U.S. Administration," said Velayati's letter, "in an open support of the aggressor Iraqi regime stormed Iranian platforms in the Persian Gulf on 18 April and set them afire."

U.S. attack on Iranian oil platforms in October 1987 and in April 1988 together with its other provocative moves, reveal the fact that Washington is bent upon mischief in the Persian Gulf, it said.

"The presence of the U.S. military forces in the region, contrary to their pretext of preserving regional security, has caused increasing [illegible] in the waterway," added Velayati.

The attacks which were of least significance from the military point of view, are part of a joint Baghdad-Washington plot to cloud the Iraqi regime's chemical attacks particularly on Halabjah town, he continued.

The letter said the U.S. military offensive against Iran's sovereignty last October coupled with the mute silence of international circles especially the NAM which ignored blatant aggression against a member country (Iran), reprersents the bitter reality that the U.S. Administration would be further encouraged conveniently continue its crimes in the Persian Gulf. [sentence as received]

Velayati noted that the unwarranted silence of international forums toward recent U.S. crimes would certainly pave the way for further acts of U.S. aggression against the Third World and NAM members throughout the world.

He called on the movement's chairman to condemn the attacks and take effective measures at the NAM to prevent superpowers especially the U.S. from embarking on aggression against member states.

Khamene'i Meets Foreign Ministry Official

LD191635 Tehran IRNA in English 1554 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 19, IRNA—Deputy Foreign Minister for Asian and Oceania Affairs Javad Mansuri Monday met with President 'Ali Khamene'i on the eve of his visit to Pakistan and India.

Mansuri will carry Khamene'i's written messages for his Pakistani counterpart Ziaul Haq and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on relations between Iran and the two countries as well as the situation in the region, especially the recent U.S. aggression on Iranian platforms in the Persian Gulf. The president gave Mansuri the necessary guidelines on the above-said subjects.

Karrubi Notes Steadfastness of Nation

LD191224 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Excerpt] According to our correspondent reporting from the Majlis session, deputy speaker Mehdi Karrubi described America's military presence in the region, its attack on Iranian oil platforms, its help and support for Saddam's regime, and the continuation of attacks on residential areas of our cities by the Iraqi regime as a new conspiracy aimed at crushing the Islamic Revolution and forcing the Islamic Republic of Iran to compromise. Pointing to the selflessness and steadfastness of the heroic Iranian nation against enemy plots, he said: A nation concerned with divine inspiration and proud to be martyred will not be forced to surrender by such conspiracies and pressures. It will not compromise. Saddam's destiny is nothing other than destruction and downfall. The enemy will see how our forces and our youth will be more prepared than before in going to the fronts to settle the fate of the war.

The Majlis deputy speaker also referred to exporting the Islamic Revolution to the world of Islam and to the moves made by America and by the reactionaries of the region in confronting the Hizballah in Lebanon and considered them indicative of this fact [as heard]. He added: As long as there are Muslims in the world of Islam and right-seeking oppressed people this way of thinking will not cease to exist. [passage omitted]

Attacks Increase Determination

LD191805 Tehran IRNA in English 1753 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 19, IRNA—The U.S. attacks on Iranian oil rigs in the Persian Gulf and the Muslim combatants positions in Al-Faw, coupled with the Iraqi missile attacks on Tehran and other cities, are indications of a pre-planned plot to push Islamic Iran into compromise with Ba'thist Iraq, said Hojjat ol-Eslam Mehdi Karrubi here today. The Majlis (parliament) vice-speaker presiding over today's open session said, global arrogance seems still unfamiliar with the determination of Iranian people and their leaders, and despite the nearly 8 years of the imposed war, it is unable to figure out that the more the pressures and plots, the more resistant and determined the Iranian public becomes.

"To push Iran's people into a bad fix or to provide Saddam (Husayn) with war equipments cannot force the Islamic Rpeublic to compromise with the enemy", he added. He pointed out that Iran's enemies should be sure that whatever aid is given to the Iraqi regime, it cannot change the Ba'thist rulers' fate which is nothing but destruction. Karrubi also noted that the Islamic revolution has been exported to the world despite plots by global arrogance. "The Muslim Palestinian uprising proves this point," he said.

U.S. Informed Italy of Impending Attack

LD191721 Tehran IRNA in English 1716 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Rome, April 19, IRNA—The spokesman of the Italian Foreign Ministry today termed U.S. attacks on Iranian oil platforms as "outcome of a rigid military logic". Giuseppe Panoccia in a brief interview with IRNA here said that Washington had informed the Italian Government of its aggression on Iranian oil rigs shortly before the attack, "but the operations plan was not clear at that time," he added. "The (Iraqi) war should end and the United Nations Security Council should evaluate ways of implementing the Resolution 598 with due respect to justice," he said.

Meanwhile in The Hague, Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti told a session of the Western European Union (WEU) Monday that a just evaluation of the ways for ending the Iraqi-imposed war is "the need of the hour." Andreotti called on the session to condemn the Iraqi regime for its use of chemical weapons. He also asked the Security Council to study Persian Gulf incidents (U.S. attack on Iranian platforms) on Monday.

Musavi, New Italian Envoy Discuss Relations

LD191834 Tehran IRNA in English 1827 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 19, IRNA—Italy's new Ambassador to Tehran Vittorio Amadeo Farinelli stressed his country's willingness to promote relations with the Islamic Republic, in his meeting with Premier Hoseyn Musavi here Tuesday. Musavi also said the existing potential for ptomotion of bilateral ties must be exploited. Adverting [as received] to the present tensions in the region Musavi said the Islamic Republic believes most of the trouble is caused by certain countries' lack of precise knowledge about the Islamic revolution's principles. "The fact is that the Islamic Revolution is part of an Islamic movement in the world," Musavi told the Italian envoy.

The prime minister stressed that the imposed war will only end through administering justice and punishing the aggressor, adding the region will not return to peace and tranquillity as long as the Iraqi Ba'thist regime exists. "Our nation will continue to resist and fight till achievement of justice," he reiterated.

Pilgrimage Supervisor Returns From Jeddah

LD191838 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Mr Emami-Jamarani, the imam's representative and supervisor of the Pilgrimmage, Religious Bequests, and Endowments Organization, who went to Hijaz [Saudi Arabia] at the head of a high-ranking delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI] to make preparations for sending 150,000 Iranian pilgrims, returned to Tehran this afternoon.

According to our correspondent, during their trip, which took place at the invitation of the Hijaz regime and during which the Saudi officials heard our country's position, Mr Emami-Jamarani and his delegation held several rounds of talks in Jeddah with a Saudi delegation composed of 'Abd al-Wahhab 'Abd al-Wasi, Saudi minister of pilgrimmage affairs and religious trusts, and several other responsible Hijaz regime officials. They explained Iran's position concerning this year's pilgrimage program of the Iranian pilgrims. They reiterated that there will be at least 150,000 Iranian pilgrims this year, and that the march of disavowal of the infidels will be organized even more gloriously than in previous years. Following his return to Tehran, the imam's representative and supervisor of the Pilgrimmage, Religious Bequests, and Endowments Organization gave an interview to our correspondent on the Saudi officials' response vis-a-vis Iran's positions. He said: The Saudi officials, contrary to their promise of previous years to increase the number of Iranian pilgrims, opposed the plan of receiving 150,000 Iranian pilgrims; they gave as their reasons a lack of necessary facilities to accept so many pilgrims and the decisions taken during the Amman summit.

He added: The decision to reduce the number of pilgrims demonstrates the obstructionism of the Hijaz rulers, and we cannot accept such decisions and other illogical reasons.

Interviewed on Saudi Trip

LD191920 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Mr Emami-Jamarani, representative of the imam and supervisor of the pilgrimage and religious endowments and charities, was interviewed by a Central News Unit reporter after returning from the Hijaz [Saudi Arabia] where he held talks with that country's officials regarding Iranian pilgrims. This interview is our next news report, to which we draw your attention.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Your Excellency, Mr Emami-Jamarani, you have just led a delegation on a trip to Saudi Arabia. Please tell us about the outcome of your talks with Saudi officials. Also, what was the latter's reaction to the announcement that 150,000 Iranian pilgrims would be sent to Saudi Arabia for the hajj.

[Emami-Jamarani] Every year, as usual, we send an advance delegation for preliminary discussions to the Hijaz. This year too, as usual, this had to be done. However, there was a delay because of all the obstructions that the Saudis have caused every year. There were even more this year. We lost 2 months of opportunities for discussions because of delays.

At the same time, however, we still went so that we would be able to continue relations. We went to the Hijaz so that we could have preliminary discussions—just like we do every year—because it is our duty to make the hajj, to perform our religious and revolutionary duties; our eligible individuals also have a religious duty to perform. We believe that the house of God belongs to the people. It is normal for the people to go there every year, despite the great tragedy that was committed against us last year.

Because of all the obstructions, there was a lot of delay. So, 2 months after the opportunity had passed, they informed us that we should go. It was decided that these talks should take place now, as usual. When we faced each other, we saw that exactly the same stance is adopted as global U.S. arrogance and its agents in the region. Those puppet rulers have placed themselves in every sense at the disposal of the West; there is a conspiracy going on here and Al Sa'ud is also not out of it. Their latest conspiracy was evident; we saw they were looking for a confrontation. From the first moment we arrived, we saw that their approach was very decisive and firm based on the argument that things should be done in accordance with whatever they say. They were basing this on the Oman conference, where a group of reactionary Arab leaders gathered to make decisions. These decisions, it is being argued, must be carried out. Of course, it is quite clear what kind of decisions would be made there.

In any case, they also said that demonstrations should on no account take place in Mecca or in Al-Madinah. This is contrary to the policy of our state and government. On the basis of the decisive stance of his grace the imam, on this occasion (?in particular) we do not recognize the hajj as being the hajj without demonstrations and without the performance of its political dimensions. Therefore, if you were to invite us to come to the hajj it would be as if you were asking us to come to the hajj and not perform half of our rituals. It is impossible for us to come and perform our hajj in a defective manner just because this is your demand and the decision of the Oman conference.

On the basis of your own promise.... [Emami-Jamarani changes thought] Their pilgrimage and religious endowment minister promised us 4 years ago that they would allow them 2 years and that after 2 years and a maximum of 3 years we would be allowed to send 200,000. We were planning on the basis that our numbers would increase every year. But this year, in accordance with the policy that they have drawn, these gentlemen are now saying: You should not be bringing more than 45,000. Meanwhile, they have made these remarks elsewhere. What they are telling me is that out of every 1,000 persons, I can go to Mecca. If you have a population of 45 million then 45,000 should come to Mecca. But they have said exactly the opposite of this in some Islamic countries which have a very small population but a high number of pilgrims. This shows that all of this is a pretext and it is because they do not want the Muslims' hajj to create any troubles for the Americans and the Israelis. The hajj of Islamic nations should follow the path that benefits the interests of the United States and Israel and the enemies of Muslims. During the pilgrimage and in Mecca and in Al-Madinah—which are the focus of loud cries against the oppressors, tyrants, and global arrogance—nobody should even breathe there.

I asked the Saudi hajj minister: Why are you upset? After all, what sort of slogans do the Iranians chant in Mecca and Al-Madinah? Are our slogans anything but Death to America and Death to Israel? Do we, the Iranians, ask in our slogans for anything but relief and assistance to the Palestinians, the Muslim Afghans, and the deprived and oppressed nations of the Islamic world? Which of these slogans bothers you? Are you upset because we chant Death to America and Israel? Are you unhappy with our support for the Muslims and the meek of Palestine, Afghanistan, or other people who are oppressed by global arrogance? The gentleman did not say anything. They have no logical answer, but it is clear that they are worried to see that Mecca and Al-Madinah are the focus of the Muslims' cries against the U.S. and Israel.

I must say with deepest regret that all the Saudi officials have become humble servants of the aliens to confront the Muslims and the oppressed. Of course, in light of the fact that we realize that they are not going to have an easy time with this matter, we warned them and told them that all this is happening because you are incapable of managing the house of God. We and all the Muslims, the realist individuals, unanimously believe that Mecca and Al-Madinah do not belong to Al Saud alone, or to the inhabitants of Mecca and Al-Madinah. Rather, everyone, including Hijaz, Iran, and other members of the Islamic world have a share. Therefore, you should permit some competent individuals to come and manage the house of God. That is, competent scholars who are trusted by the Muslims and not the ulema that you have created for your court, who are expected to translate the Koran in a manner pleasing to you and your masters. That is, the ulema who have not sold themselves and are not hirelings of others, those who are not influenced by some foreign policy. Such ulema should come and take the fate of the holy places into their hands, knowing well what they are doing.

At any rate, as a result of our harsh dialogue in the session, they ultimately said that under no circumstances would they agree with our political programs, and as for the number, it is limited to the 45,000 that they have approved themselves. Ultimately, one must say that they see themselves as the guardians of the Muslims and allow themselves to make decisions on behalf of the believers, saying: So many pilgrims should come from such and such country. Of course, if we were to promise that we will have nothing to do with political matters, then they might agree with our figure. However, it appears that all their demands center on the axis that political activities are not included in the hajj rituals and that such deeds should not be undertaken. That is what we are all against.

[Correspondent] In light of the the stand of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was declared decisively, and your talks with the Saudi officials during this trip, what do you think of this year's hajj to Arabia by the Iranian pilgrims?

[Emami-Jamarani] Of course, the whole thing depends on the fate of the power and might of the Muslim nations, and whether the Islamic world will protest this issue and the cruelty to which they subjected the honorable Iranian nation last year. The fact that this year they are preventing them from going to hajj in the numbers they demand, they are, in fact, preventing people's hajj rituals and are not allowing us to perform our hajj rituals with safety. As to whether the hajj rituals can be performed under these circumstances, this depends on a decree and order of his holiness the imam. That is, his holiness will decide whether or not we should go to Mecca under these circumstances. [end recording]

WIH Denies Iraqi Claim of Downing Bombers

LD201011 Tehran IRNA in English 1005 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 20, IRNA—A spokesman for the War Information Headquarters (WIH) refuted Iraqi regime's claims that its forces had downed two Iranian fighters in Al-Faw operational region Tuesday. Terming the claims as "totally baseless," the spokesman said all Iranian fighter bombers returned safely to bases after their sortie.

Ground Operations, Missile Strikes Continue

Volunteers Sent to Fronts

NC190431 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Following the U.S. aggression against our oil platforms in the Persian Gulf and the coordination between the U.S. and Iraqi Armies in the attacks against the Al-Faw area, and following a call by the IRGC and the Supreme Council for War Support, a group of zealous youths from Lorestan Province left for the fronts yesterday afternoon within the framework of an extraordinary dispatch. The Central News Unit reports that while not more than 1 week has passed since the programmed dispatch of the Imam Husayn fighters from Lorestan, in less than 12 hours groups of Basiji volunteers applied to the dispatch centers and were rapidly organized and sent to the arenas to defend our Islamic homeland.

Also, following the statement issued by the IRGC General Staff, a large number of fresh Basiji forces from Khorasan Province left for the operational theaters yesterday afternoon. Together with the dispatch of these dear ones, a group of volunteer students from Mashhad's Technical and Engineering College left for the battlefields to fight the enemies of Isalm, shouting the slogan "Iran's Persian Gulf is Reagan's grave."

Volunteers From Khuzestan

NC190554 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Citing the Ahvaz IRGC commander, the Central News Unit reports that when the Muslim people of Khuzestan Province heard reports that the United States and reaction openly collaborated in supporting the Zionist Iraqi regime's attack on the positions of the forces of Islam in the Al-Faw area, and the U.S. military attack on three Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf, and after a call by the IRGC General Staff and by the War Support Headquarters to the popular forces for their presence on the fronts, the brave youths of this province and a large number of devoted Basijis went to the Mobilization bases and expressed their readiness to go to the battlefronts.

According to this report, officials in charge of mobilization of Khuzestan's 6th Army have made extensive preparations for the participation of the popular forces at the battlefronts, organized an extraordinary dispatch of forces, and dispatched a large number of volunteers, who had expressed their readiness to go to the fronts, last night.

Students 'Ready To Fight'

LD191311 Tehran IRNA in English 1258 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 19, IRNA—Twelve million elementary and secondary school boys are ready to fight to the last drop of their blood the criminal U.S. and its regional mercenary Saddam (Husayn), announced Deputy Education Minister Ruhollah Mirzai'e [name as received], here Tuesday, following Monday's U.S.-attack on two Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf.

Defeated and humiliated in all its attempts against the Islamic Revolution the criminal U.S., sensing danger to its vested interests in the region and other Muslim states, has initiated a new mischief by ganging-up with its fraudalent lackey, Saddam, against the Islamic Republic of Iran, the statement issued by Mirzai'e said.

The statement describing the U.S., as the "criminal of the century" warned that the the era of dominating Muslim states and their resources has long ended with the fatal blows dealt on the U.S. by the leader of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeyni, and the Muslim people of Iran. All Iranian students along with their teachers and the staff of the Ministry of Education will defend the Islamic Republic of Iran to the last person, against the plots of the U.S. and Saddam, the statement concluded.

Forces To Depart; Bases on Alert

LD200910 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0230 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] The mobilization unit of the IRGC has issued a statement on the dispatch of special Seyyed al-Shohada forces in the holy month of Ramadan, announcing:

The liberation of five Iraqi cities and a number of villages overlooking Darbandi Khan Dam by the heroic forces of Islam has caused a great deal of fear among the executioners of Baghdad, regional reacionaries, and their arrogant supporters. Once again the United States has directly entered the arena and, in support of the declining Iraqi regime, has directly attacked oil installations and carried out operations against the forces stationed in the Al-Faw region. Today our revolution and our heroic nation face the onslaught of the evil triangle of the United States, Iraq, and the reactionaries.

Therefore, at this sensitive juncture, to response to the bestial aggression of the United States and regional reactionaries, all mobilization forces, including those who are ready for redispatch—trained and specialist forces—should immediately report to the mobilization centers throughout the country and should prepare for departure. Those who have not yet received training should as soon as possible report to the mobilization training centers.

Meanwhile, all the bases and resistance centers throughout the country are on full alert and are prepared to receive popular forces for dispatch to the battlefronts.

Iraqi Sites in Al-Faw Bombed

LD191051 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] According to a report from the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces, the brave and selfless pilots of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran, after carrying out 42 successful missions yesterday, today carried out 16 separate missions using several fighter bombers at 0750, 0800, 0810, 0820, 0830, 0840, 0850, 0900, 0910, 0920, 0945, 0955, 1020, 1030, 1120, and 1200. They bombed Iraqi concentration points and armored units in the Al-Faw operational theater. Having inflicted heavy damage and casualties on the Zionist enemy, they returned safely to base.

1,200 Iraqi Casualties

LD191734 Tehran IRNA in English 1727 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 19, IRNA—Some 1,200 Iraqi forces were killed and wounded and some others captured by Iranian Muslim combatants in the northwestern operational regions in lightning attacks on Tuesday.

General Command of the three forces of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) announcing the above said 220 Iraqi POW's including some officers and NCO's have so far been evacuated behind the fronts, it added.

The attacks were launched by the IRGC Ground Forces to consolidate Iranian liberated position in the "Val-Fajr-10" and "Zafar-7" operational regions.

The IRGC Ground Forces stormed Iraqi positions in Shakh-Shemiran [placename as received], Gujar and Rishen [as received] heights capturing parts of enemy positions.

A large amount of enemy equipment were destroyed and some vehicles, a good deal of munitions as well as some light and semi-heavy weapons of the enemy troops were also seized by the Muslim forces of Iran.

Communique No 3,177

LD191759 Tehran IRNA in English 1746 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 19, IRNA—Iranian jet fighters flew 16 sorties Tuesday heavily bombing concentration sites of Iraqi troops and armoured units in the Al-Faw peninsula and inflicting substantial casualties and losses on the enemy. The fighters returned safely to bases after successfully carrying out their missions, said a military communique here today.

The 3177th Joint Staff communique said that Iranian long-range artillery pounded economic and military centers of the Iraqi cities of Al-Sulaymaniyah, Khanaqin, Banmil, Mandali, Quratu, Basra and 'Ali al-Gharbi as well as Dukan Dam installations and Chuman Mostafa, Qasr and Dar al-Salam garrisions from Monday evening to Tuesday morning. The Iranian retaliatory shelling inflicted substantial losses on the said centers.

An Iraqi Sukhoi-22 jet fighter was shot down by Iranian anti-aircraft fire in the Al-Faw peninsula at 16:04 hours local time (12:34 GMT) Monday.

On Monday, the Islamic Republic Air Force effectively carried out its routine patrol missions over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman to reconnoiter positions of foreign ships.

Iraqi forces suffered heavy losses in men and equipment throughout the fronts in artillery duels with Iran's Muslim combatants Monday.

An Iraqi patrol convoy attempting to infiltrate Iranian positions in Qasr-e Shirin, western sector, Monday sustained several casualties and was forced to flee when shelled by the Muslim forces.

In Panjwin, Yebis and Eynkhosh, Iranian artillery fire suppressed activities of Iraqi tank squadrons Monday, heavily damaging some enemy tanks.

In the southern sector, Iranian artillery fire checked Iraqi engineering operations in Chazabeh and Hoseyniyeh, and enemy logistical activities in Sharhani, Zobeydah and Tib Monday, inflicting some casualties and losses on the enemy.

Iranian Gendermerie forces traded artillery fire with Iraqi troops in parts of the southern and western sectors Monday, killing and wounding a number of enemy soldiers and destroying several gun emplacements of theirs.

Air Force Bombs Irbil Sites

NC200449 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran has announced that in retaliation for the bestial attacks by the Baghdad rulers on our residential areas, at 0630 today [0300 GMT] the brave pilots of the Islamic Republic's Air Force carried out a successful bombing raid. The target of their fiery bombs was the military-economic installations of Irbil. Heavy casualties and damages were inflicted on the Saddamists. The swift-winged pilots of our Air Force returned to their bases safely after carrying out these retaliatory operations.

300 Iraqi Troops Killed

LD201020 Tehran IRNA in English 1003 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 20, IRNA—Iranian combatants killed or wounded more than 300 Iraqi troops and transferred over 250 enemy POW's to the rear of the frontlines during their towards advance Iraqi positions in the northwestern fronts Tuesday night.

According to the central headquarters of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) today Muslim forces took over another part of Iraqi positions on the other side of liberated the Shakh-Shemiran, Gujar and Rishen heights in the course of the operations.

Iranian helicopter gunships along with anti-armoured units of the IRGC Ground Forces destroyed dozens of Iraqi tanks, personnel carriers, gun emplacements and vehicles concurrently with the operations, the headquarters said.

Planes Raid Hamadan, Dezful

LD201057 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] According to an IRNA report the Zionist Iraqi regime in continuation of its wicked deeds, today conducted air raids on the cities of Dezful, Hamadan, and Borujerd and bombed several residential points in these cities. As a consequence of these barbaric attacks, several of our compatriots were martyred and wounded. Some houses and one school were damaged.

Fighting Near Majnun Islands

LD201133 Tehran IRNA in English 1120 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] Ahvaz, Khuzestan Prov., April 20, IRNA—Twenty Iraqi soldiers were killed and one Iraqi tank, one machine gun, three group bunkers, and one truck were destroyed by Muslim combatants opposite Majnun islands during the past 24 hours. The engineering activities of the enemy were halted in these fronts during the said period.

U.S. Attacks Destroying 'Marine Life' in Gulf

LD191741 Tehran IRNA in English 1722 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 19, IRNA—Following the tripartite U.S.-Kuwait-Iraq conspiracy in attacking Iran's oil platforms which caused destruction to marine life in the Persian Gulf and disturbed its aqua system balance, deputy prime minister and head of the environment protection organisation, Hadi Manafi today sent messages to international environment officials.

The messages were addressed to executive director of the United Nations Environment Programmes (UNEP), Dr. Mostafa K. Tolba and executive secretary of regional marine environment, Dr. al-Awahdi in Nairobi and Kuwait. In his messages, Manafi called on them to denounce such "ominous incidents."

Commentary on Clashes With U.S. Forces

LD191306 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1108 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] In order to give direct support to the despondent regime of Iraq, U.S. forces yesterday attacked our oil platforms for the second time since they came to the Persian Gulf. Yesterday's U.S. helicopter and warship attacks on our oil platforms took place after the previous night's incident when a number of helicopters of that criminal superpower, in the framework of their joint conspiracy with the Ba'thist forces, brought our fighters' positions on the Al-Faw peninsula under heavy fire.

It is interesting to note that in the process of this full-scale war against our Islamic homeland, the small shaykhdom of Kuwait offered the use of Bubiyan Island, thus revealing its part in this new plot. The new battle, which started yesterday, was not unexpected. Our Islamic homeland was bound to face it eventually, because of the weakness of the Saddamist forces.

Since the outbreak of the war, it was expected that our main enemy and the true warmonger would enter the scene when the Saddam regime neared its final defeat. That day will be the day of our main battle. That day has now come. U.S. and Iraqi forces have confronted our great nation in a coordinated operational plan, by utilizing the facilities of regional reactions.

In reality, preparations for this confrontation started weeks ago. At that time, in order to place pressure on our 50-million strong ummah, the Eastern and Western superpowers made great efforts to once again strengthen the Ba'thist regime, despite its weaknesses. However, these efforts, which included sending missiles to Iraq and encouraging the Ba'thist regime to stage repeated attacks on our country's residential areas, were foiled thanks to the extensive operations of our fighters in northern Iraq. Moreover, the unprecedented resistance of our people in the face of attacks on residential areas and their swift adaptation to new conditions made the enemy less hopeful about the effectiveness of missile attacks. The enemy's despondency reached its peak when the people participated extensively in the Majlis elections, and once again demonstrated their deep devotion to their divine system.

Thus, the feeble attempts of the Ba'thist regime in missile attacks and bombings on towns reached an impasse and, despite their investment in these attacks, the East and West realized the futility of their action. Therefore, the world-devourers thought that under these circumstances they had no choice but to make extensive plans to carry out joint actions between the United States and regional reaction, the joint, criminal action which is in progress against our nation now.

Our resisting nation, in these historic conditions, faces the basest factions in the world and is preparing to create the greatest honors for Islam and the deprived people of the world. To fight against world-devourers and such factions is the duty of modern man. Our combative and model ummah is at present engaged in this great and fateful battle, leading the deprived and oppressed of the world. Mobilization centers and bases all over the Islamic homeland are ready to send trained volunteers to the scenes of clashes, to train other volunteers, and to prepare them for battle. May the great mobilization and dispatch of forces to the fronts lead to the great and final victory of our mobilization ummah.

Recent Events 'Engineered' To Oppose Islam

LD191316 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1113 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] As indicated in the news, in reply to U.S. aggression, the forces of Islam decisively opened fire on U.S. warships. In addition to downing a U.S. helicopter gunship and inflicting damage on a U.S. tug, one of the oil platforms in the Persian Gulf that is run by American interests was heavily bombarded by our forces. Frank Carlucci, the U.S. secretary of defense, in response to a question described the speedy and decisive operations of the forces of Islam as indescribable within the Western framework of logic and practice. The British prime minister in turn and within the well-known framework of London's policies—that is, full adherence to Washington's demand—described the Reagan administration's aggressive action as justified and correct. Meanwhile, U.S. officials have themselves clearly announced that those countries that have sent warships and forces to the Persian Gulf were informed in advance of this decision. In addition to China and the Soviet Union, the Iraqi regime and some other littoral countries of the Persian Gulf were also informed of this aggression.

The Reagan administration, in the course of yesterday and today, has consistently tried to justify the aggression and pretend that the U.S. forces did not sustain the slightest damage in the fighting and that their superiority over the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran is quite clear and obvious. However, regardless of the undeniable damage sustained by the U.S. forces in yesterday's confrontations, the Reagan administration and other U.S. officials, having learned from their experiences in Lebanon and South Vietnam, are quite aware that the U.S. military personnel, warships, and advanced planes—despite being equipped with the most modern machinery—are very vulnerable to the initiatives taken by the committed and martyrdom-seeking forces of Islam. Moreover, in view of the extensive and deep influence of the Islamic Revolution in the hearts of the Muslims of the world, the dimensions of such a war will not be limited to the waters of the Persian Gulf and the aerial and land borders of Islamic Iran. Therefore, the U.S. nation and the opposition to Reagan should note that the present policies of the White House take them, step-by-step, closer to a swamp deadlier and more dangerous than that of Vietnam and Lebanon.

Contrary to the futile recommendations of the Reagan administration, the heroic nation of Iran will not consider the recent aggression by the U.S. forces over until fundamental and retaliatory blows have been dealt to the criminal enemy. The Islamic Revolution of Iran considers the continued existence of its real life to involve practical adherence to the Koranic principle of nonacceptance of suppression and aggression and of decisive retaliation to suppression and aggression. In following this principle, the Iranian nation will not take into account in its political calculations the aggressor's power and military might nor the expanse of the fronts of the aggression, particularly because according to the alert and risen nation of Iran, the recent developments in the Persian Gulf can not be separated from the developments in the Al-Faw peninsula, the missile attacks and bombing raids on residential districts, and the continued plots by Britain and the United States in the Security Council. They are all based on the principle of opposing the Islamic Revolution of Iran and preventing the restoration of the just rights of the Muslim nation of Iran.

Therefore, the Muslim ummah of Iran are determined to start a new offensive on the joint front of Baghdad and Washington and to pave the way for crushing the aggressors and restoring our rights.

Tehran English on U.S. 'Plot' in Gulf

LD200006 Tehran in English to Europe
1930 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Political commentary: "The Plot Hatched by Imperialism and the Reactionary Elements Against Iran"]

[Excerpts] In the latest plot orchestrated by the reactionary elements and world imperialism against the Islamic Republic of Iran and with the impending Al-Qods day, the aggressive government of America, in countenance with the well-equipped Ba'thist-Zionist regime of Iraq, attacked the Iranian forces stationed in the Al-Faw peninsula. Deploying military helicopter in south of Al-Faw and enjoying the facilities on Bubiyan Island belonging to Kuwait, American military men embarked on supporting the Iraqi military needs in the Al-Faw front and in a blatant and flagrant manner, backed up the Iraqi regime in its attack against Al-Faw. This is at a time when it is likely that the Zionist regime of Baghdad, enjoying the modern equipment of Eastern and Western military advisers, has initiated calculated military as well as propoganda moves with specific objectives in the current conditions.

According to the military experts, this measures has been taken by America and Iraq on two major reasons: the first one is for the fiasco sustained by the Iraqi-Ba'thist Zionist regime in its loss in Kurdistan and the liberation of vast areas in tht region and the fall of five important cities in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province, the regime ruling over Baghdad, launched a barrage of missiles over the city and residential areas of Iran in the past fortnight. Using chemical weapons, this regime made endeavors to somewhat make up for the aforementioned fiasco. However, this attempt faced utter failure due to the resistance of the Iranian nation in the face of the missile as well as air attack and the reaction shown by the world circles and public opinion concerning the chemical carnage of Halabjah.

The second reason relates to the failure of American diplomatic moves in the Middle East and the rising escalation of the Islamic revolution, an issue that has created much concern for America, Zionism, and reactionaries. It is in the process of such events that the ruling reactionary in Kuwait, the American aggressor and the Iraqi Ba'thist regime have embarked on a (?concerted) and harmonized mood against the Islamic Iran.

It should be paid attention that in the past fortnight, the Western mass-media, benefiting from the aircraft hijacking and other issues, made attempts to prepare the world public opinion for the execution of this plot. The barbaric American attack against the nonmilitary oil platforms in the Persian Gulf met with the severe reaction from the Iranian forces. The combatants of Islam, by attacking the aggressor America, practically showed that they have no fear to confront the aggressor American Government. In this connection, the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran cabled messages to the secretary general of the UN as well as the chairman of the UN Security Council and demanded the UN and the Security Council's attention to the American invasion against the interest of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Now, this question is posed: With this measure being carried out by America, how can the UN Security Council still claim that it seeks an end for the war in a peaceful way while America, as the main member of the Security Council of the UN, itself blatantly extends its military support to Iraq and practically enters a war against the Islamic Republic? Undoubtedly, the Americn blunder in its blatant conformity with Iraq and its attacks against the Iranian oil platforms will bear a great effect on the political prestige of America; and the Muslim Iranian combatants, while responding to these aggressions will also remain firm to punish the aggressor. Such plots cannot influence the just stand of the Islamic Republic regarding the imposed war. But it is indisputable that conformity of Kuwait and America with the Baghdad regime will not only (?fail) to bring an end to the war but it will also boost the crisis in the region. [passage omitted]

Although the Muslim nation has never pinned hope in international forums and it has always believed that to gain its right from the aggressor it will not wait for any resolution or circular, the only reason for warning the Security Council is the Islamic Republic of Iran's commitment to international laws and circles. The Islamic Republic enjoys the necessary and enough capability to regain its right. Undoubtedly, the recent conspiratorial aggression of America has accelerated the attainment of this right.

'Ideological Attack' To Follow U.S. Aggression

NC200852 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0330 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Commentary prepared by the Central News Unit research group]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] The Islamic Republic's military forces have responded to the U.S. attack by striking at an oil installation run by the United States in the Persian Gulf, a U.S. helicopter, and a U.S. tugboat. However, the truth is that America's recent mischiefs have not yet been effectively answered by the [word indistinct] Iranian people. [passage omitted]

If the U.S. forces do their best to assist the Iraqi regime in order to force our nation to give up its rights which have been trampled on in the war, they will undoubtedly drive themselves nearer to the edge of a perilous precipice. This is because Iran's Islamic revolution can, with the backing of the supporters of revolutionary [words indistinct] throughout the Middle East as well as in other parts of the world, (?threaten) all the interests which America has accumulated on a wide scale in a bid to achieve its colonialist intentions. America has not learned from its past defeats in Vietnam, Lebanon, and Iran and is now linking its destiny to the dangerous strategy of the Iraqi regime. By expanding the war to the Persian Gulf and by drawing regional countries and reactionary forces into the war, the Iraqi regime has constantly sought to extricate itself from the hazardous situation created by this war.

By coordinating with this strategy, the United States will not only be unable to free Iraq from this perilous situation, but will involve itself and other regional countries in a war that will spread. This war can only be successfully fought by those forces with the greatest capability to resist and tolerate difficulties and carry out confrontations. The pious forces armed with militant and revolutionary Islam as a divine ideology will be more capable than other forces of emerging from such conditions. Of course, the Islamic Revolution has always supported the idea of exporting the revolution through an exchange of views and in a peaceful way. However, in the present very tense and critical situation which the United States is trying to create, it will be able, with the assistance of popular forces, to carry out an ideological attack throughout the region.

May this adventurism of the United States be the turning point. May the Arab reactionaries and the aggressive Zionists be cast into the fire that has been sparked off by the United States. And may it be in such a way as to lead toward the further linking of Iran's Islamic Revolution with the Palestinian people's Islamic movement.

Briefs

Nonoil Exports

Last year, [year ending 20 March 1988] the volume of the country's nonoil exports to foreign markets was 1,154,000,000 tonnes worth 77,654,000,000 rials. [Text] [*NC190646 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 19 Apr 88*]

Pakistan

Junejo Addresses Parliament on Afghan Accord

BK201128 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Mohammad Khan Junejo, has said the Geneva accord on Afghanistan fully answers Pakistan's vital concerns on the issue. He was addressing the joint session of the two houses of Parliament in Islamabad this afternoon at the conclusion of a 2-day discussion on the accord. He said Pakistan has signed the accord after receiving positive assurances on the question of the formation of a broad-based transitional government in Afghanistan, the return of refugees, and symmetry in superpowers assistance to the opposing factions.

The prime minister pointed out that while the Soviet Union announced in February last its intention to withdraw from Afghanistan without any caretaker arrangements, Pakistan impressed upon the Soviet leadership that instead of solving the problem, this would lead to bloodshed. The Afghan refugees in Pakistan would not be willing to return to their homeland if conditions there were not congenial. It was due to Pakistan's efforts that ultimately the UN mediator, Mr Diego Cordovez, was asked to initiate discussions between Afghan factions and explore the possibility of a broad-based transitional government in Afghanistan. Pakistan was also assured by the Soviet Union of help in improving conditions inside Afghanistan. Parliament is to meet again tomorrow morning to discuss the Ojri Camp incident.

President Views Indian Relations, Accusations

BK190240 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] President Mohammad Ziaul Haq has reaffirmed that Pakistan is determined to follow its policy of normalizing relations with India and wants to establish good-neighborly relations with that country. In an interview with a PTI correspondent, the president said Pakistan will continue to implement its policy of noninterference in the internal affairs of all countries, particularly in neighboring countries.

He described as baseless allegations that Pakistan is interfering in the internal affairs of India. He said he has often given assurances at every level that Pakistan is not involved in eastern Punjab. He said an early meeting between the home secretaries of the two countries will prove beneficial to eliminating misunderstandings about interference in the internal affairs. Pakistan is awaiting a date for this meeting from India.

Jhelum River Water Rights 'Will Be Protected'

BK191205 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 4 Apr 88

[Text] The federal minister for water and power, Qazi Abdul Majid Abid, has given the assurance that the elected government would fully protect Pakistan's rights under the Indus Basin Treaty. Speaking during discussion in the National Assembly today on construction of Wular Barrage over the River Jhelum by India, he said every drop of water to which Pakistan is entitled under the treaty will be protected and not given away at any cost. He explained the steps already taken by the government to resolve the matter. Seventeen members took part in the discussion which took place on three identical adjournment motions on the subject. The house will meet again tomorrow morning.

Government Protests Barrage

BK191550 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Excerpt] The National Assembly was told today that the elected government would fully protect Pakistan's rights under the Indus Basin Treaty. Speaking during discussion on construction of Wular Barrage over the River Jhelum by India, Federal Minister for Water and Power Qazi Abdul Majid Abid said every drop of water to which Pakistan is entitled under the treaty will be protected and not given away at any cost. The minister said the elected government is fully aware of its responsibilities and is determined to solve this very important matter immediately and in the supreme national interest.

The federal minister explained the steps already taken by the government to resolve the matter. He said it is true that India has violated the provisions of this treaty under which Pakistan is entitled to the water of the Jhelum River. He said Pakistan had protested to India on its violations. As a result, India agreed to hold talks on this matter on an official level. These talks are continuing and India has postponed construction work on the barrage. He described as false the reports that the construction is still continuing. He said if the talks do not lead to stoppage of construction of barrage by India, then Pakistan will use its right under the Indus Basin Treaty for arbitration at an international level. Pakistan is consulting international legal and technical experts before exercising its right to arbitration. [passage omitted]

Delhi Embassy Denies Reports on Siachen Talks

BK191702 Hong Kong AFP in English 1647 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] New Delhi, April 19 (AFP)—The Pakistan High Commission said here Tuesday Islamabad intended to propose a new set of dates "in the near future" for talks with India on the disputed Siachen Glacier in Kashmir. The embassy said in a statement that Pakistan had taken the first initiative on the Siachen talks, proposing either 5-6 April or 12-13 April for the negotiations, but that India had counter-proposed April 25 as a date.

Widely published Indian reports Sunday saying Pakistan had turned down an "Indian proposal" for talks between the two countries' defense secretaries on the glacier were "misleading", the embassy statement said. It added that the Pakistan defense secretary was preoccupied with developments surrounding last week's massive ammunition explosion outside Rawalpindi. The Siachen Glacier on India's northern frontier with Pakistan was the scene of a major three-day battle between the two armies in September.

State Minister on Illegal Entries, Drug Arrests

BK190941 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] One thousand and eighty-nine foreigners have been apprehended since January last year for illegally entering and staying in the country. This information was given to the National Assembly this morning by the minister of state for interior, Raja Nadir Parvez. He said that some people had entered into Pakistan illegally due to economic conditions prevailing in the neighboring country. The government does not encourage such illegal entry and so they are sent back through embassies of their countries. One of them apprehended in the NWFP is accused of spying.

Raja Nadir Parvez said there has been a decrease in the use and trafficking of drugs. Four hundred and eighty-seven drug smugglers are at present under detention. They include 32 foreigners.

Spokesman Voices Concern Over Gulf Hostilities

BK191638 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Pakistan has expressed its deep concern for the future of peace and stability in the Gulf following expansion and escalation of hostilities. A spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in Islamabad today that air strikes on oil installations and naval ships yesterday have aggravated an already grave situation. He said it is regrettable that these developments have occurred at a time when serious and earnest efforts are being made by the UN secretary general to bring an end to the Iran-Iraq war. The spokesman said Pakistan urges all concerned to exercise restraint, observe principles of law, and refrain from provocative acts which confound an already tragic situation.

Azad Kashmir Cabinet Ministers Resign

BK161532 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] The ministers of the Azad Kashmir cabinet have tendered their resignations, which have been accepted by Prime Minister Sardar Sikander Hyat Khan. The prime minister has announced that the new Cabinet will be formed within 15 days.

Sri Lanka

Foreign Minister Welcomes Geneva Accord

BK160844 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 0740 GMT 16 Apr 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, April 16 (LANKA PUWATH)—Sri Lankan Foreign Minister A.C.S. Hameed, in a message issued in Colombo today on the signing of the Geneva accord, said that the Government of Sri Lanka welcomes the signing of the historical Geneva accord for the peaceful settlement of the Afghanistan problem.

The message further states: "The government extends its congratulations on this occasion to all who participated in bringing about this successful outcome, after protracted negotiations under UN mediation."

"The Afghanistan problem has been a long standing one. The present accord shows that international problems that might seem intractable to solution can be successfully dealt with if there is goodwill, understanding and a spirit of give and take. Sri Lanka is happy over the successful role played by the UN in bringing about this accord. This achievement certainly strengthens this august body.

"We in Sri Lanka, are particularly happy about the accord, as we have been deeply concerned over the implications of the Afghanistan problem for South Asia and specially as it concerns one of our members, Pakistan."

"The accord removes an impediment to peace and stability in the region, and it is our fervent hope that it will be implemented in a spirit of goodwill and understanding so that we could live in a climate of peace, amity and cooperation in accordance with the fundamental principles of nonalignment."

'Terrorists' Kill Provincial Candidate

BK140955 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 0902 GMT 14 Apr 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 14 April (LANKA PUWATH)—Southern terrorists were alleged to have shot dead a candidate of the United Socialist Alliance (USA) for the forthcoming provincial council elections, official sources told LANKA PUWATH today.

They said that Mahindapala Edirisuriya of Wellawaya was shot dead at 0800 hours [0230 GMT] yesterday morning, when he was having his morning wash.

EROS Leader Killed by 'Unidentified Men'

BK181613 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] In Sri Lanka, the EROS [Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students] leader, Jagan, was shot dead by some unidentified men near Trincomalee last night. The PKF has launched a search to apprehend the culprit.

Tamil Leaders Killed in Factional Fighting

BK190942 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 0910 GMT 19 Apr 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Apr 19 (LANKA PUWATH)—Terrorists attacked a Sri Lankan Security Forces post at Velvettiturai in Jaffna, Friday with small arms, official sources told LANKA PUWATH. They said the sentries on duty retaliated causing the terrmrists to withdraw.

Reports from Muttur in eastern Sri Lanka state that the LTTE has virtually declared war in Trincomalee against its former partner, the EROS.

A leader of EROS, Krisnapillai Jayaraja was yesterday shot dead by LTTE terrorists and reports from Vullikuwam state that R.K. Rahman of the LTTE was shot dead by terrorists belonging to the EROS gang. The bullet riddled bodies were handed over to the next of kin of the dead persons by the forces.

Security Forces, IPKF Clash With Separatists

Storehouse Raided

BK191032 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 1016 GMT 19 Apr 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 19 April (LANKA PUWATH)—The Army Special Task Force (STF) and police in joint operations conducted yesterday raided a cave, in Akuressa in Sri Lanka's deep south used as terrorists' storehouse, official sources told LANKA PUWATH. The sources said the Sri Lankan forces on this operation recovered 30 shot gun cartridges. They also said that a hardcore southern terrorist, H.C. Dharmadasa was arrested at Urubokke. He had in his possession, at the time of arrest, 2 locally made guns (galkatas).

The security forces arrested 2 hardcore southern terrorists at Marawella in the deep south and seized 3 shot guns.

Reports from Amparai state that an unidentified person shot dead Abeysinghe Mudiyanselage Podiappuhamy when he was in a paddy field at 0635 hours (local time) last morning at Paragahauale in Sri Lanka's Eastern Province district of Amparai.

4 LTTE Camps Destroyed

BK170758 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] In Sri Lanka, three LTTE men were killed and four of their camps destroyed during PKF search operations in the northern Vavuniya sector yesterday. According to agency reports, 6 persons were arrested and some arms and ammunition recovered; 32 suspects were also nabbed at check-points. The PKF began its search operations a week back in Mannar, and Virat and Trishul in Vavuniya jungles.

Vavuniya Operations Noted

BK181327 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 1214 GMT 18 Apr 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, April 18 (LANKA PUWATH)—Two terrorists were killed and three others, who managed to escape, believed injured when the IPKF encountered five terrorists in Sri Lanka's northern Vavuniya sector, yesterday, official sources told LANKA PUWATH. They said one .38 pistol was recovered.

In a separate engagement, an IPKF patrol fired at six terrorists injuring one. The injured one tried to consume cyanide but was prevented from doing so.

The IPKF also recovered one G-03 rifle, 3 magazines of G-03 rifles, 68 rounds of small arms and ammunition and 1 hand grenade in search operations in Vavuniya.

Another report from the same sector states that a total of five terrorists were apprehended by Indian troops.

They are Thavindrajan alias Juhan, Batrithosan alias Menon, Rajratnam alias Charlie, Ravindranath alias Reghuran and Rajaderan alias Vimal.

Official sources said that Indian troops recovered 108 round of G-03 rifle ammunition from the same area.

Two terrorists names Johney alias (?Rawa) and Pullavaraja alias Erriba were apprehended.

The IPKF also located and destroyed three terrorists camps in the Vavuniya sector.